AVON BOOKSHOP
815 N. Charles St.
Baltimore, Maryland

Charlotte County Library
3 0000 00031 1195

Charlotte County Public Library,
Charlotte Court House, Virginia.

THE WORLD MOURNED AT ANATOLE FRANCE'S BIER

His funeral was conducted with regal pomp by the French Republic. At the left is the home where he was born.

THE AMETHYST RING

BY ANATOLE FRANCE

A TRANSLATION
BY B. DRILLIEN

BOOKLOVERS' EDITION

NEW YORK: WM. H. WISE & CO.
MCMXXX

PRINTED IN U. S. A. BY
FERRIS PRINTING COMPANY
BINDING BY - VAN REES
BOOK BINDING CORPORATION

THE AMETHYST RING

THE AMETHYST RING

CHAPTER I

RUE to her word, Madame Bergeret quitted the conjugal roof and betook herself to the house of her mother, the widow Pouilly.

As the time for her departure drew near, she had half a mind not to go, and with a little coaxing would have consented to forget the past and resume the old life with her husband, at the same time vaguely despising M. Bergeret as the injured party.

She was quite ready to forgive and forget, but the unbending esteem in which she was held by the circle in which she moved did not allow of such a course. Madame Dellion had made it clear to her that any such weakness on her part would be judged unfavourably; all the drawing-rooms in the place were unanimous upon that score. There was but one opinion among the tradespeople: Madame Bergeret *must* return to her mother. In this way did they uphold the proprieties and, at the same time,

rid themselves of a thoughtless, common, compromising person, whose vulgarity was apparent even to the vulgar, and who was a burden on everybody about her. They made her believe there was something heroic in her conduct.

"I have the greatest admiration for you, my child," said old Madame Dutilleul from the depths of her easy chair, she who had survived four husbands, and was a truly terrible woman. People suspected her of everything, except of ever having loved, and in her old age she was honoured and respected by all.

Madame Bergeret was delighted at having inspired sympathy in Madame Dellion and admiration in Madame Dutilleul, and still she could not finally make up her mind to go, for she was of a homely disposition and accustomed to regular habits and quite content to live on in idleness and deceit. Having grasped this fact, M. Bergeret redoubled his efforts to ensure his deliverance. He stoutly upheld Marie, the servant, who kept every one in the house in a state of wretchedness and trepidation, was suspected of harbouring thieves and cut-throats in her kitchen, and only brought herself into prominence by the catastrophes she caused.

Four days before the time appointed for Madame Bergeret's departure, this girl, who was drunk as usual, upset a lighted lamp in her mistress's

room and set fire to the blue chintz bed-curtains. Madame Bergeret was spending the day with her friend, Madame Lacarelle. She returned and, amid the dreadful stillness of the house, beheld on entering her room the evidences of the disaster. She called and called in vain for her stony-hearted husband and her besotted maid, then stood gazing at the smoke-blackened ceiling and the dismal ravages of the fire. This commonplace accident assumed in her eyes a mystic significance that frightened her. But presently as the candle began to flicker she lay down, tired out and very cold, upon her bed under the skeleton of the charred canopy whose black shreds fluttered like the wings of a bat. The next morning, on waking, she wept for her blue curtains, the souvenir and symbol of her youth; bare-footed, with dishevelled hair, smothered with blacks and clad only in her nightdress, she ran desperately about the rooms, crying and moaning. M. Bergeret took no notice of her; for him she had ceased to exist.

That evening, with the help of the girl Marie, she drew her bed into the middle of the dreary room. But now she realised that this room could never again be a resting-place for her, and that she must leave the room where for fifteen years she had fulfilled the duties of daily life.

Moreover, the ingenious Bergeret, having taken rooms for his daughter Pauline and himself in a

little house in the Place Saint-Exupère, was busy moving out and moving in.

He went backwards and forwards ceaselessly between the two houses, keeping close to the walls, and trotting along with the agility of a mouse suddenly unearthed in a heap of debris. His heart was glad within him, but he concealed his joy, for he was a prudent man.

Having been told that, at an early date, she must hand over the keys of the house to the landlord, Madame Bergeret in like manner set about despatching her furniture to her mother, who lived in a maisonnette on the ramparts of a little northern town. She made bundles of clothes and of linen, pushed the furniture about, gave orders to the men, sneezed in the dusty atmosphere, and wrote out labels addressed to "Madame Veuve Pouilly."

From her labours Madame Bergeret derived moral assistance, for it is good for mankind to work. It takes a man's mind off his own life and turns him away from dreadful self-examination; it keeps him from that which makes solitude unbearable, the contemplation of that other being, his real self. It is the sovereign remedy for moral and æsthetic obsessions. Work is also excellent, in that it panders to our vanity, hides from us our impotence, and flatters us with the hope of something good to come. We imagine that it enables us to steal a march on Fate.

Failing to realise the necessary relation between individual endeavour and the mechanism of the universe, we fondly imagine that our efforts are directed to our own advantage against the rest of the machine. Work gives us illusory determination, strength and independence, and makes us as gods in our own eyes. We appear to ourselves as so many heroes, genii, demons, demiurges, gods—yes, as God Himself. And, in fact, man has always conceived of God as a worker. Thus it was that the removal restored Madame Bergeret's natural gaiety and the joyous energy of her physical strength. She sang songs as she tied up parcels; the rapid flow of blood in her veins made her content, and she looked forward to a happy future.

She painted in glowing colours her life in the little Flemish town where she would live with her mother and her two younger daughters. There she hoped to grow young again, to be brilliant and admired, to have attention offered her, and to find sympathy. Who could say whether, once the decree *nisi* was granted in her favour, a second and wealthy marriage were not awaiting her in her native town? Was it not quite possible that she might marry a good-tempered, sensible man, a country gentleman, an agriculturist or a Government official, somebody quite different from M. Bergeret?

The packing-up also afforded her peculiar satis-

faction, for from it she derived some solid advantages in the way of gain. Not satisfied with the appropriation of what she had brought as her marriage portion, and a large share of the common property, she heaped into her trunks things which she ought in ordinary fairness to have left to others. In this way she packed among her underclothes a silver cup which had belonged to M. Bergeret's maternal grandmother. Again, she added to her own jewels which, be it said, were of no great value, the watch and chain of M. Bergeret's father, a professor at the University, who, having refused in 1852 to swear fidelity to the Empire, had died in 1873, poor and forgotten.

Madame Bergeret interrupted her packing only to go and pay her farewell calls, visits both sad and triumphant. Public opinion was in her favour. Men's judgments are diverse, and there is no place in the world where there is undivided and unanimous opinion on any single subject. *Tradidit mundum disputationibus eorum.* Madame Bergeret herself was the subject of polite discussion and of secret dissent. The greater number of the ladies of her acquaintance considered her irreproachable, otherwise they would not have received her at their houses. There were a few, however, who suspected that her adventure with M. Roux had not been quite blameless; some of them even went so far as to say

so. One blamed her, another excused her, a third approved of her, casting all the blame upon M. Bergeret, as being a spiteful man.

That point, too, was open to doubt. Some people declared M. Bergeret to be a nice, quiet man, the only thing to dislike in him being his too subtle mind, which was at variance with public opinion.

M. de Terremondre said that M. Bergeret was a very nice sort of man; to which Madame Dellion replied that if he were really a good man he would have stood by his wife, however wicked she was.

"There would be some merit in that," she said. "There is nothing noble in putting-up with a charming woman."

Another opinion of Madame Dellion's was: "M. Bergeret is doing his utmost to keep his wife, but she is leaving him, and quite right too! It serves M. Bergeret right."

Thus did Madame Dellion express opinions which were inconsistent, for human thought has ever depended not upon force of reason but on violence of feeling.

Although the world is known to be uncertain in its judgment, Madame Bergeret would have gone from the town in possession of a good reputation, if on the very eve of her departure, when paying her farewell visit to Madame Lacarelle, she had not met M. Lacarelle alone in the drawing-room.

M. Gustave Lacarelle, chief clerk at the *préfecture,* had a long, thick, fair moustache, which, while the chief characteristic of his countenance, was also destined to determine his character. In his student days at the Law Schools, his comrades had discovered in him a resemblance to the ancient Gauls, as depicted in the sculpture and paintings of the later romanticists. Other more careful observers, remarking that the long strands of hair were situated under the snub nose and placid eyes, gave Lacarelle the name of "The Seal." The latter, however, did not prevail against that of "The Gaul." Lacarelle became "The Gaul" to his companions, who consequently made up their minds that he ought to be a great drinker, a great fighter, and a devil with the women, in order that he might conform in reality to the Frenchman of immemorial tradition. At the Corps dinners he was forced to drink far more than he wanted, and he could never go into a *brasserie* with his friends without being pushed up against some tray-laden waitress. When he married and returned to his native town, and, by what was a great stroke of fortune in those days, obtained a post in the Central Administration of the department from which he hailed, Gustave Lacarelle continued to be called "The Gaul" by the most important of the magistrates, lawyers, and Government officials who frequented his house. The ignorant mob, however,

did not bestow this name upon him until 1895, in which year a statue to Eporedorix was erected and unveiled on the Pont National.

Twenty-two years previously, under the presidency of M. Thiers, it had been decided that subscriptions should be invited for the erection of a statue to the Gaulish chief Eporedorix, who, in the year 52 B.C., led the river tribes against Cæsar, and imperilled the small Roman garrison by cutting down the wooden bridge built by them to ensure communication with the rest of the Army. The archæologists of the little county town firmly believed that this feat of arms had been accomplished in the *Commentaries* which all the learned societies of the district quoted as a proof of the fact that the wooden bridge cut down by Eporedorix was situated in *their* particular town. There is a great deal of uncertainty with regard to Cæsar's geography, and local patriotism is both fierce and jealous. The chief town of the department, three *sous-préfectures,* and four smaller towns quarrelled for the glory of having slaughtered the Romans by the hand of Eporedorix.

Competent authority decided the question in favour of the capital town of the department. It was an unfortified town, which much to its sorrow and anger had been forced in 1870 after one hour's bombardment to allow the enemy to enter its walls, walls which in the time of Louis XI had been crum-

bling to pieces, and now lay concealed beneath the ivy that had overgrown them.

The town had undergone the hardships and privations of military occupation. It had suffered and atoned. The project of erecting a monument to the memory of the Gaulish chief was received with enthusiasm by the townspeople, who were experiencing the humiliation of defeat, and were all the more grateful to their long-dead compatriot for providing them with something of which they could be proud. Resuscitated after fifteen hundred years of oblivion, Eporedorix united all the citizens in a bond of filial devotion. The name of the hero roused no distrust in any of the different political parties which were then dividing France. Opportunists, Radicals, Constitutionalists, Royalists, Orleanists, Bonapartists, they all gave to the scheme; half the cost was subscribed within the year, and deputies of the department obtained from the Government what was wanting to make up the required sum.

The order for the statue of Eporedorix was given to Mathieu Michel, David d'Angers' youngest pupil, he whom the Master had called his Benjamin. Mathieu Michel, who was then in his fiftieth year, at once set to work, and attacked the clay with a generous, if somewhat cramped, hand, for the republican sculptor had done but little work during

the Empire. In less than two years, however, he finished the figure, a plaster model of which was exhibited in the Salon of 1873, among many other Gaulish chiefs gathered together among the palms and begonias under the huge glass dome. Owing to the endless formalities insisted upon by the authorities, the statue was not finally completed in marble for another five years. After this, so many administrative difficulties, so many disputes arose, between the town and the Government, that it looked as though the statue of Eporedorix would never be erected upon the Pont National.

In 1895, however, the work was accomplished, and the statue, arriving from Paris, was received by the *préfet*, who solemnly handed it over to the mayor of the town. Mathieu Michel accompanied his work. He was then over seventy, and the whole town turned out to look at the old man with his lion-like head and long, flowing, white hair.

The inauguration took place on the 7th of June, when M. Dupont was Minister of Public Instruction, M. Worms-Clavelin *préfet* of the department, and M. Trumelle mayor of the town. Doubtless the enthusiasm was not what it would have been on the morrow of the invasion, when indignation was at its height, but at any rate everybody was satisfied. The speeches and also the uniforms of the officers met with applause, and when the green veil which

hid Eporedorix from view was withdrawn the whole town cried as with one voice, "Lacarelle! it is Lacarelle! it is the image of Lacarelle!"

This, to tell the truth, was by no means correct. Mathieu Michel, the pupil and emulator of David d'Angers, he whom the venerable master called the child of his old age, the republican sculptor and patriot, insurgent in '48, volunteer in '70, had not portrayed M. Gustave Lacarelle in this marble hero. No, indeed! This chief, with his shy and gentle look, clasping his lance, and seeming, under his wide-winged helmet, to be meditating upon the poetry of Chateaubriand and the historic philosophy of Henri Martin, this warrior, steeped in romantic melancholy, was not, in spite of what the people cried, the true portrait of M. Lacarelle.

The *préfet's* secretary had big, prominent eyes, a short, snub nose, flabby cheeks, and a double chin. Mathieu Michel's Eporedorix gazed with deep-set orbs into the distance. His nose was Grecian, and the contour of his face pure and classical. But, like M. Lacarelle, he had a tremendous moustache, the long, curving branches of which were visible from every point of view.

Struck by this resemblance, the crowd unanimously bestowed upon M. Lacarelle the glorious name of Eporedorix, and from that time the secretary of the *préfet* found himself compelled to personate in pub-

lic the popular idea of the Gaul, and to conform to it by word and deed under all circumstances. Lacarelle was fairly successful, for he had had plenty of practice since his student days, and all that was required of him was to be hail-fellow-well-met with everybody, keen on the Army, and a teller of broad stories when necessary. He was considered to be an adept at kissing women, and so he became a great embracer. He kissed them all and he kissed them always. It did not matter who they were: women, young girls, and little girls, pretty ones and plain, old and young, he embraced them out of pure Gaulishness, and with no evil intentions, for he was a moral man.

And that is why, coming unexpectedly upon Madame Bergeret waiting in the drawing-room for his wife, he immediately embraced her. Madame Bergeret was not ignorant of M. Lacarelle's little habit, but her vanity, which was great, confounded her judgment, which was scanty. She thought he kissed her because he loved her, and straightway fell into so great an emotion that her bosom heaved stormily, her legs gave way beneath her, and she sank panting into the arms of M. Lacarelle. The latter was both surprised and embarrassed, but his amour-propre was flattered. He placed Madame Bergeret as comfortably as he could upon the couch,

and, bending over her, said in a voice filled with sympathy:

"Poor lady! So charming and so unhappy! And so you are leaving us? You are going to-morrow?"

And he imprinted upon her brow a chaste kiss. But Madame Bergeret, whose nerves were all unstrung, burst into a fit of sobs and tears; then slowly, solemnly, and sorrowfully she returned his kiss at the very moment that Madame Lacarelle entered the room.

The next day the whole town sat in judgment upon Madame Bergeret, who had remained among them just one day too long.

CHAPTER II

HAT day the Duc de Brécé was entertaining General Cartier de Chalmot, Abbé Guitrel, and Lerond, the ex-deputy, at Brécé. They had visited the stables, the kennels, the pheasantry, and had been talking, all the time, about the Affair.

As the twilight fell, they commenced to stroll slowly along the great avenue of the park. Before them the château rose up, in the dapple grey sky, with its heavy façade laden with pediments and crowned with the high-pitched roofs of the Empire period.

"I am convinced," said M. de Brécé, "as I said before, that the fuss made over this affair is, and can only be, some abominable plot instigated by the enemies of France."

"And of religion," gently added Abbé Guitrel. "It is impossible to be a good Frenchman without being a good Christian. And it is clear that the scandal was started in the first place by freethinkers and freemasons, by Protestants."

"And Jews," went on M. de Brécé, "Jews and

Germans. What unheard-of audacity to question the decision of a court-martial! For, when all is said and done, it is quite impossible for seven French officers to have made a mistake."

"No, of course, that is not to be thought of," said the Abbé Guitrel.

"Generally speaking," put in M. Lerond, "a miscarriage of justice is a most improbable thing. I would even go so far as to say an impossible thing, inasmuch as the law protects the accused in so many ways. I am speaking of civil law, and I say the same of martial law. As far as courts-martial are concerned, even supposing the prisoner's interest to be less thoroughly safeguarded owing to the comparatively summary form of procedure, he finds all necessary security in the character of his judges. To my mind it is an insult to the Army, to doubt the legality of a verdict delivered by a court-martial."

"You are quite correct," replied the Duke. "Besides, can any one really believe seven French officers to be mistaken? Is such a thing conceivable, General?"

"Hardly," replied General Cartier de Chalmot. "It would take a great deal to make me believe it."

"A syndicate of treachery!" cried M. de Brécé. "The thing is unheard of!"

Conversation flagged and fell. The Duke and the General had just caught sight of some pheasants in

a clearing, and, smitten simultaneously with the burning and instinctive desire to kill, mentally recorded a regret at having no guns with them.

"You have the finest coverts in the district," said the General to the Duc de Brécé.

The Duke was deep in thought.

"I don't care what any one says," he remarked, "the Jews will never be any good to France."

The Duc de Brécé, eldest son of the late Duke—who had cut a dash among the light-horse at the Assemblée de Versailles—had entered public life after the death of the Comte de Chambord. He had never known the days of hope, the hours of ardent struggle, of monarchical enterprises as exciting as a conspiracy and as impassioned as an act of faith. He had never seen the tapestried bed offered to the Prince by noble ladies, nor the banners, the flags and the white horses which were to bring the King to his own again. By right of birth as a Brécé he took his place as deputy at the Palais-Bourbon, nourishing a secret enmity against the Comte de Paris, and a hidden wish never to see the restoration, if it were to be in favour of the younger branch of the Royal Family. With this one exception he was a loyal and faithful Royalist. He was drawn into intrigues which he did not understand, made a hopeless muddle of his votes, spent his money freely in

Paris, and when the elections took place found himself defeated at Brécé by Dr. Cotard.

From that day onward he devoted his time to farming, to his family and to religion. All that remained of his hereditary domain, which in 1789 was composed of one hundred and twelve parishes, comprising one hundred and seventy "Hommages," four "Terres titrés," and eighteen manors, was about two thousand acres of land and forest around the historic castle of Brécé. In his department the Brécé coverts invested him with a lustre that he had never enjoyed at the Palais-Bourbon. The forests of Brécé and La Guerche, in which Francis I had hunted, were also celebrated in the ecclesiastical history of the district, for in these woods was situated the time-honoured chapel of Notre-Dame-des-Belles-Feuilles.

"Now mark what I tell you," repeated the Duc de Brécé, "the Jews will bring misfortune upon France. Why don't we get rid of them? Nothing would be easier!"

"It would be a great thing," replied the magistrate, "but not so easy as you imagine, M. le Duc. In the first place, if you wish in any way to affect the position of the Jews in this country, you must make new laws on naturalisation. Now it is always difficult to make a law which will satisfactorily fulfil the intentions of the legislator, and laws such as

these would affect the whole of our legal system, and would, moreover, be extremely difficult to draft. Then, unfortunately, we could never be certain of finding a Government ready to propose or support them, nor a Parliament to carry them. The Senate is no good. As history unrolls itself before our eyes we make the discovery that the eighteenth century is one huge error of the human understanding, and that social as well as religious truths are to be found in their full completeness only in the traditions of the Middle Ages. By and by France will find it necessary—as Russia has done with regard to the Jews—to revert to the procedure adopted in those feudal times which offer the best example of the typical Christian state."

"Naturally," said the Duke, "Christian France should belong to Frenchmen and Christians, not to Jews and Protestants."

"Bravo!" cried the General.

"There was a younger son in our family," went on the Duke, "called Nez-d'Argent—I don't know why—who fought in the provinces during the reign of Charles IX. On that tree whose leafless top you see over there, he hanged six hundred and thirty-six Huguenots. Well, I must confess I am proud of being a descendant of Nez-d'Argent. I have inherited his hatred of heretics, and I hate Jews in the same way that he hated Protestants."

"Such sentiments are most praiseworthy, M. le Duc," remarked the Abbé, "most laudable, and worthy of the great name you bear. But, if you will allow me, I will make a comment on just one point. In the Middle Ages the Jews were not considered heretics, and, properly speaking, they are not heretics. The heretic is a man who, having been baptised, and instructed in the doctrines of the faith, misrepresents or denies them. Such are, or rather were, the Arians, the Albigenses, the Novatians, the Montanists, the Priscillianists, the Waldenses, the Anabaptists, and the Calvinists, so cleverly disposed of by your illustrious ancestor, Nez-d'Argent; not to mention many other sects who upheld doctrines contrary to the beliefs of the Church. The number of them is very great, for variety is a characteristic of error. There is no stopping on the downward path of heresy; and schism reproduces and multiplies itself *ad infinitum*. All that one finds opposing the true Church is the dust and ashes of churches. The other day, when reading Bossuet, I came across an admirable definition of a heretic. 'A heretic,' says Bossuet, 'is one who holds an opinion of his own; one who acts according to his own ideas and his own feelings.' Now the Jew, who has never received baptism nor been instructed in the truth, cannot rightly be called a heretic.

"And again we see that the Inquisition never chastised a Jew as such, and if a Jew was handed over to earthly justice it was because he was a blasphemer, a profane person, or a corrupter of the faithful. A better name for the Jew would be infidel, because that is the name we give to those who, being unbaptised, do not believe in the truths of the Christian religion. Again, we must not, strictly speaking, look upon the Jew as an infidel, in the same way as we should a Mohammedan or an idolater. The Jews occupy a unique and singular position in the economy of the eternal verities. Theology bestows upon them a designation conformable to their rôle in history. They were called 'witnesses' in the Middle Ages, and we must admire the force and precision of such a term. The reason why God allows them to live is that they may serve as witnesses and sureties for the words and deeds upon which our religion is founded. We must not go so far as to say that God purposely makes the Jews obstinate and blind to serve as living proofs of Christianity; but He utilizes their free and voluntary stubbornness to confirm us in our belief. It is for that reason that He allows them a place among the nations."

"But in the meanwhile," put in the Duke, "they rob us of our money and destroy our national energy."

"And they insult the Army," said General

Cartier de Chalmot. "Or rather it is insulted by the wretches in their pay."

"And that is a crime," remarked the Abbé gently. "The salvation of France depends upon the alliance of the Church and the Army."

"Well, then, M. l'Abbé, why do you defend the Jews?" demanded the Duc de Brécé.

"Far from defending them," replied the Abbé Guitrel, "I condemn their unpardonable sin, which is to deny the divinity of Jesus Christ. On this point their obstinacy is invincible. Their own belief is rational enough, but they do not believe all that they should, and that is why they have drawn so heavy a blame upon themselves. This blame rests upon the Jews as a nation, and not as individuals, and cannot touch any who have been converted to Christianity."

"For my part," said the Duke, "converted Jews are just as odious to me, more odious even, than other Jews. It is the race I dislike."

"Allow me to say I do not believe you, M. le Duc," said the Abbé. "For that would be to sin against charity and the teaching of the Church. I am sure that, like myself, you are grateful to a certain extent to some unconverted Jews for their liberal donations towards our charities. It is impossible to deny, for instance, that families like the R—— and the F—— have, in this respect, shown an example

which might well be followed by all Christian families. I will go so far as to say that Madame Worms-Clavelin, although not openly converted to Catholicism, has on several occasions given proof of truly divine inspiration. It is to the *préfet's* wife that we owe the tolerance with which in the midst of general persecution our Church schools are regarded in this department. As for Madame de Bonmont, who is a Jewess by birth, she is a true Christian indeed, and takes pattern to a certain extent by those holy widows who in centuries past gave a part of their riches to the churches and the poor."

"The Bonmonts' real name is Gutenberg," put in M. Lerond. "They are of German extraction. The grandfather amassed his riches by the manufacture of the two poisons, absinth and vermuth, and was imprisoned no less than three times for infringement and adulteration. The father, who was a manufacturer and a financier, made a scandalous fortune through speculation and monopoly. Subsequently his widow presented a golden ciborium to Monseigneur Charlot. That sort of people always makes me think of the two attorneys who, after listening to a sermon by good Father Maillard, said to each other at the church door, 'Well, neighbour, have we got to disgorge?' "

"It is an extraordinary thing," said M. Lerond,

"that the Semitic question has never arisen in England."

"That is because the English are not made the same as we are," said the Duke. "Their blood is not so hot as ours."

"True," said M. Lerond. "I fully appreciate that remark; but it may arise from the fact that the English engage all their capital in trade, while our hard-working population save theirs for speculation; in other words, for the Jews. The whole trouble arises from having to submit to the laws and customs of the Revolution. Salvation lies in a speedy return to the old régime."

"That's true," said the Duc de Brécé thoughtfully.

They walked along, chatting as they went. Suddenly a char-à-banc passed them, bowling along the road thrown open to the inhabitants of the town by the late Duke. Filled with laughing, noisy people, it went swiftly past them; amongst the country-women with their flower-bedecked hats, and the farmers in blouses, sat a jovial red-bearded fellow smoking a pipe. He was pretending to aim at imaginary pheasants with his cane as they passed by. It was Dr. Cotard, member for the Brécé district, member for the ancient seigniory of Brécé.

"That, at any rate, is a strange sight," said M. Lerond, brushing off the dust raised by the char-à-banc, "to see Cotard, the medical officer of health,

representing this district, upon which your ancestors, M. le Duc, showered benefits and glories for eight hundred years. Only yesterday I was rereading in M. de Terremondre's book the letter which your great-great-grandfather, the Duc de Brécé, wrote in 1787 to his steward, and which proves how kind-hearted he was. You remember the letter, do you not?"

The Duke replied that he remembered the letter in question, but could not be sure of the precise terms employed.

M. Lerond immediately began to recite by heart the principal phrases of this touching letter. "I have learned," wrote the Good Duke, "that the inhabitants of Brécé are forbidden to gather strawberries in the woods. People are evidently doing their best to make me disliked, and that would be a terrible grief to me."

"I have also found," continued M. Lerond, "some interesting details on the life of the good Duc de Brécé in M. de Terremondre's summary. The Duke spent the worst days of the Revolution here on his estate without being in any way molested, for his good deeds gained him the love and respect of his old retainers. In exchange for the titles of which by a decree of the National Assembly he was deprived he received that of Commander of the National Guard of Brécé. M. de Terremondre goes

on to tell us that on the 20th of September, 1792, the municipality of Brécé assembled in the courtyard of the castle, and there planted a tree to Liberty, to which was suspended this inscription, 'Hommage à la vertu!' "

"M. de Terremondre," returned the Duke, "drew his information from the archives of my family. I myself asked him to go into them, for, unfortunately, I have never had the time to do so. Duke Louis de Brécé, of whom you were speaking, surnamed 'the Good Duke,' died of grief in 1794. He was gifted with a kindness of disposition which even the Revolutionists themselves delighted to honour. Every one recognises the fact that he distinguished himself by his loyalty to his King; that he was a good master, a good father, and a good husband. You must take no notice of the so-called revelations of a man called Mazure, who is keeper of the departmental archives. According to him the 'Good Duke's' benevolence was confined to his prettiest vassals, on whom he liked to exercise his 'droit de jambage.' As far as that goes, this particular right to which I allude is of a very problematical nature, and I have never been able to discover a trace of it among the Brécé archives, which, by the way, have been in part destroyed."

"This right," said M. Lerond, "if it ever did exist at all, was nothing more nor less than a payment in

meat or wine which serfs were called upon to bring to their lord before contracting marriage. If I remember rightly, there were certain localities where this tax existed, and was paid in ready money to the value of three halfpence."

"With regard to that," went on the Duke, "I consider my ancestor entirely exonerated from the accusations brought against him by this M. Mazure, who, I am told, is a dangerous man. Unfortunately——" The Duke heaved a slight sigh, and continued in a lower and mysterious voice: "Unfortunately, the Good Duke was in the habit of reading pernicious books. Whole editions of Voltaire and Rousseau, bound in morocco and stamped with the Brécé coat of arms, have been discovered in the castle library. He fell, to a certain extent, under the detestable influence of the philosophical thought that was rampant among all classes of people towards the end of the eighteenth century, even among those in the highest society. He was possessed of a mania for writing, and was the author of certain Memoirs, the manuscript of which is still in my possession. Both the Duchess and M. de Terremondre have glanced through it. It is surprising to find there traces of the Voltairian spirit, and the Duke now and then shows his partiality for the Encyclopædists. He used, in fact, to correspond with Diderot. That is why I have thought it wise

to withhold my consent to the publication of these Memoirs, in spite of the request of some of the savants of the districts, and of M. de Terremondre himself.

"The Good Duke could turn a rhyme quite prettily, and he filled whole books with madrigals, epigrams, and stories. That is quite excusable. A far more serious matter, however, is that he sometimes permitted himself to jeer at the ceremonies of our holy religion, and even at the miracles performed by the intervention of Notre-Dame-des-Belles-Feuilles. I beg, gentlemen, that you will say nothing of all this; it must remain strictly between ourselves. I should be very sorry to hand over anecdotes such as these to feed the unhealthy curiosity of men like M. Mazure, and the malice of the public in general. The Duc de Brécé in question was my great-great-grandfather, and my family pride is great. I am sure you will not blame me for this."

"Much valuable instruction and great consolations are to be derived from what you have just related to us, Monsieur," said the Abbé. "The conclusion we arrive at is that France, which in the eighteenth century had turned away from Christianity, and was so steeped in wickedness, even to the very greatest in the land, that good men, such as your noble great-great-grandfather, pandered to the false philosophy; France, I say, punished for her crimes by a terrible

revolution, is now amending her evil ways, and witnessing the return to piety of all classes of the nation, especially in the highest circles. Examples such as yours, Monsieur, are not to be ignored, and if the eighteenth century, taken altogether, appears as the century of crime, the nineteenth, judging by the attitude of the aristocracy, may, if I mistake not, be called the century of public penance."

"God grant that you are right," sighed M. Lerond. "But I dare not allow myself to hope. My profession as a man of law brings me into contact with the masses, and I invariably find them indifferent, and even hostile to religion. Let me tell, you, M. l'Abbé, that my experience of the world leads me to share in the deep sorrow of the Abbé Lantaigne, and not in your optimistic view of things. Now, without going further afield, do you not see that this Christian land of Brécé has become the fief of the atheist and freemason, Dr. Cotard?"

"And who can say," demanded the General, "whether the Duke will not unseat Dr. Cotard at the next elections? I am told that a contest is more than probable, and that a good number of electors are in favour of the château."

"My decision is unalterable," replied the Duke, "and nothing can make me change it. I shall not stand again. I have not the necessary qualifications to represent the electors of Brécé, and the electors

of Brécé have not the necessary qualifications for me to wish to represent them."

This speech had been composed by his secretary, M. Lacrisse, at the time of his electoral reverse, and since then he had made a point of quoting it on every possible occasion.

Just at that moment three ladies, descending the terrace steps, came along the great drive towards them.

They were the three Brécé ladies, the mother, wife, and daughter of the present Duke. They were all tall, massive, and freckled, with smooth hair tightly plastered back, and clad in black dresses and thick boots. They were on their way to the church of Notre-Dame-des-Belles-Feuilles, situated by the side of a well half-way between the town and the château.

The General suggested that they should accompany the ladies.

"Nothing could be more delightful," said M. Lerond.

"True," assented the Abbé, "and all the more so because the sacred edifice, which has lately been restored and richly redecorated by the care of the Duke, is most delightful to see."

The Abbé Guitrel took a special interest in the chapel of Notre-Dame-des-Belles-Feuilles, of which, in archæological and pious vein, he had written a

history, for the purpose of attracting pilgrims to the shrine. According to him the church dated from the reign of Clotaire II. "At this period," wrote the historian, "St. Austrégisile, full of years and good works, and exhausted by his apostolic labours, built with his own hands in this desert spot a hut, where he could pass his days in meditation, and await the approach of blessed death; he also erected an oratory, in which he placed a miraculous statue of the Blessed Virgin."

This assertion had been vigorously contested by M. Mazure in the *Phare*. The keeper of the departmental archives maintained that the worship of Mary came well after the sixth century, and that at the time in which St. Austrégisile was supposed to have lived there were no statues of the Virgin. To which the Abbé Guitrel replied in the *Semaine Religieuse* that before the birth of Jesus Christ the Druids themselves worshipped the image of the Virgin who was to bear a son, and thus our old earth that was to witness the remarkable spread of the worship of Mary contained her altars and images, prophetic in significance as the warnings of the sibyls, to herald her appearance upon it. Therefore, argued he, there was nothing strange in St. Austrégisile's possessing an image of the Blessed Virgin as early as the reign of Clotaire II. M. Mazure had treated the arguments of the Abbé as

idle fancies, and no one, save M. Bergeret, whose curiosity was unbounded, had read the record of this logomachy.

"The sanctuary erected by the holy apostle," went on the Abbé Guitrel's pamphlet, "was rebuilt with great magnificence in the thirteenth century. At the time of the wars of religion that devastated the country during the sixteenth century, the Protestants fired the chapel, without, however, being able to destroy the statue, which by a miracle escaped the flames. The church was rebuilt at the behest of King Louis XIV and his pious mother, but during the Reign of Terror was totally destroyed by the commissioners of the Convention, who carried the miraculous statue, together with the furniture of the chapel, into the courtyard at Brécé and made a bonfire of the whole. Fortunately, however, one of the Virgin's feet was saved from the flames by a good peasant-woman, who wrapped it carefully in old rags and hid it in a cauldron, where it was discovered in 1815. This foot was included in a new statue which, thanks to the generosity of the Duke, was executed in Paris in 1852."

The Abbé Guitrel went on to enumerate the miracles accomplished from the sixth century up to the present time by the intervention of Notre-Dames-des-Belles-Feuilles, who was in particular request for the cure of diseases of the respiratory

organs and the lungs. And he further affirmed that in 1871 she had turned the Germans aside from the town and miraculously healed of their wounds two soldiers quartered at the château of Brécé, which had been turned into a hospital.

They reached the bottom of a narrow valley with a stream flowing between moss-grown stones. On an irregular platform of sandstone, surrounded by dwarf oak trees, rose the oratory of Notre-Dame-des-Belles-Feuilles, newly constructed from the plans of M. Quatrebarbe, the diocesan architect, in that modern namby-pamby style which people fondly imagine to be Gothic.

"This oratory," said the Abbé Guitrel, "was burned down in 1559 by the Calvinists, and again in 1793 by the revolutionaries, and nothing remained but a mass of ruins. Like another Nehemiah, the Duc de Brécé has rebuilt the sanctuary. The Pope this year, has granted to it numerous indulgences, no doubt with the object of quickening the worship of the Blessed Virgin in this country. Monseigneur Charlot himself celebrated the Holy Eucharist here, and since then pilgrims have flocked to the shrine. They come from all parts of the diocese, and even farther. There is no doubt that such co-operation and zeal must draw special blessings on the country. I myself had the

felicity of bringing to the feet of la Vierge des Belles-Feuilles several respectable families of the Tintelleries. And, with the permission of the Duke, I have more than once celebrated Mass at this favoured altar."

"That is true," said the Duchess. "And it is noticeable that the Abbé takes more interest in our chapel than the Curé of Brécé himself."

"Good M. Traviès!" said the Duke. "He is an excellent priest, but an inveterate sportsman, and all he thinks of is shooting. The other day, on returning from the administration of extreme unction to a dying man, he brought down three partridges."

"Now that the branches are devoid of leaves," said the Abbé, "you can see the chapel, which in the summer, is entirely hidden by the thick foliage."

"One of the reasons which made me determine to rebuild the chapel of Notre-Dame-des-Belles-Feuilles," said the Duke, "was that on examining the family archives, I found that the battle-cry of the Brécés was 'Brécé Notre-Dame!' "

"How very strange!" remarked General Cartier de Chalmot.

"Is it not?" replied Madame de Brécé.

Just as the ladies, followed by M. Lerond, were crossing the rustic bridge that spans the stream, a ragged girl of thirteen or fourteen, with hair of the

same dirty white colour as her face, slipping from a copse on the opposite side of the hollow, ran up the steps and rushed into the oratory.

"There's Honorine," said Madame de Brécé.

"I've been wanting to see her for a long time," said M. Lerond, "and I must thank you, Madame, for being the means of satisfying my curiosity. I have heard so much about her!"

"Yes, indeed," said General Cartier de Chalmot. "The young girl in question has been subjected to many and searching inquiries."

"M. de Goulet," put in the Abbé, "comes regularly to the sanctuary of Notre-Dame-des-Belles-Feuilles. It is his pleasure and delight to spend long hours in adoration of her whom he calls his mother."

"We are very fond of M. de Goulet," said Madame de Brécé. "What a pity it is that he should be so delicate."

"Yes, alas!" replied the Abbé. "His strength diminishes from day to day!"

"He ought to take more care of himself," went on the Duchess, "and rest as much as possible."

"How can he, Madame?" asked the Abbé. "The management of the diocese fills up every moment of his time."

As the three ladies, the General, M. Guitrel, M. Lerond, and the Duke entered the chapel, they saw

Honorine, as in an ecstasy, kneeling at the foot of the altar.

With clasped hands, and uplifted head, the child knelt there motionless. Out of respect for her mysterious condition, they crossed themselves silently with holy water, letting their gaze wander from the Gothic tabernacle and fall upon the stained-glass windows, in which the Comte de Chambord appeared in the guise of St. Henry, while the faces of St. John the Baptist and St. Guy were executed from photographs of Comte Jean, who died in 1867, and the late Comte Guy, who, in 1871, was a member of the Bordeaux Assembly.

The miraculous statue was covered by a veil, and stood just over the altar. But above the holy-water stoup, painted in bright colours upon the wall was a full-length figure of Notre-Dame de Lourdes, girdled with blue.

The General looked at her with a set expression derived from fifty years of mechanical respect, and gazed at her blue scarf as though it had been the flag of a friendly nation. He had always been looked upon as something of a mystic, and had considered a belief in the future life to be the very base and foundation-stone of military regulations. Age and ill-health were making a devotee of him. For some days past, though he did not betray it, he had been, if not worried, at any rate grieved, by the

recent scandals. His simple-mindedness had taken fright at such a tumult of words and passions, and he was obsessed by vague misgivings. He sent up a voiceless prayer to Notre-Dame de Lourdes, imploring her protection for the French Army.

All of them, the women, the Duke, the lawyer, and the priest, had by this time riveted their gaze upon the worn shoes of the motionless Honorine, and these sombre, solemn, solid folk fell into an ecstasy of admiration at the sight of the lithe young body, now stiff and rigid; M. Lerond, who prided himself on being very observant, made sundry observations.

At last, however, Honorine came out of her trance. She rose to her feet, bowed to the altar, and turned round; then, as though astonished at the sight of so many people, stood stock still and brushed away with both hands the hair that had fallen over her eyes.

"Well, my child, did you see the Blessed Virgin to-day?" asked Madame de Brécé.

In the shrill sing-song voice of a child in the catechism class answering by rote, Honorine replied:

"Yes, Madame. The good Virgin remained for one moment, then rolled up like a piece of calico, and I didn't see her any more."

"Did she speak to you?"

"Yes, Madame."

"What did she say?"

"She said, 'There is much misery in your home.' "

"Is that all she said?"

"She said, 'There will be much misery in the country over the harvests and the cattle.' "

"Did she not tell you to be good?"

" 'Pray continually,' she said to me, and then she said like this, 'I greet you. There is much misery in your home.' "

And the words of the child rang out in the imposing silence.

"Was the Blessed Virgin very beautiful?" again questioned Madame de Brécé.

"Yes, Madame. But one eye and one cheek were missing, because I had not prayed long enough."

"Had she a crown upon her head?" asked M. Lerond, who, as an ex-member of the magistracy, was inquisitive and fond of asking questions.

Honorine hesitated, and then, with a cunning look, replied:

"Her crown was on one side."

"Right or left?" asked M. Lerond.

"Right and left," answered Honorine.

Madame de Brécé intervened.

"What do you mean, my child, that it was first on the right and then on the left? Isn't that what you mean?" But Honorine would not answer.

She was in the habit sometimes of indulging in

obstinate silences, standing, as now, with lowered eyes, rubbing her chin on her shoulder and fidgeting. They stopped questioning her, and she slipped out and away, when the Duke began forthwith to explain her case.

Honorine Porrichet, the daughter of a small farmer who had lived all his life at Brécé and had fallen into the direst poverty, had always been a sickly child. Her intelligence had developed so slowly and tardily, that at first she was looked upon as an idiot. The Curé used to reproach her for her wild disposition and the habit she had of hiding in the woods; he did not like her. But some enlightened priests who saw and questioned her could find in her nothing evil. She frequented churches, and would linger there lost in dreams unusual in a child of her age. Her zeal grew at the approach of her first communion. At that time she fell a victim to consumption, and the doctors gave her up. Dr. Cotard, among others, said there was no hope for her. When the new oratory of Notre-Dame-des-Belles-Feuilles was inaugurated by Monseigneur Charlot, Honorine assiduously frequented it. She fell into ecstasies when there, and saw visions. She saw the Blessed Virgin, who said to her, "I am Notre-Dame-des-Belles-Feuilles!" One day Mary approached her, and, laying a finger upon her throat, told her she was cured.

"It was Honorine herself who came back with this remarkable story," added the Duke, "and she related it several times with the utmost simplicity. People have said that her story was never twice the same; what is certain, however, is that any inconsistency on her part only concerned the minor details of the narrative. What is also certain is that she suddenly ceased to suffer from the disease that was killing her. The doctors who examined and sounded her immediately after the miraculous apparition found nothing wrong either with the bronchial tubes or the lungs. Dr. Cotard himself confessed that he could make nothing of the cure."

"What do you think of these facts?" said M. Lerond to the Abbé.

"They are worthy of attention," replied the priest, "and give rise, in all honest observers, to more than one reflexion. It would certainly be impossible to study them too assiduously. I can say no more. I should certainly never put aside such interesting and consoling facts with bold contempt like M. Lantaigne, neither should I dare, like M. de Goulet, to call them miracles. I reserve my opinion."

"In Honorine Porrichet's case," said the Duke, "we must consider both the remarkable cure, which I am right in saying was directly opposed to medical knowledge, and the visions which she declares to be vouchsafed to her. Now you are aware,

M. l'Abbé, that when the girl's eyes were photographed, during one of her trances, the negatives obtained by the photographer, of whose good faith there is not the shadow of a doubt, contained the figure of the Blessed Virgin, imprinted upon the pupil of the eye. Certain persons whose evidence can be relied on swear to having seen the photographs, and to having distinguished, with the aid of a strong magnifying-glass, the statue of Notre-Dame-des-Belles-Feuilles."

"These facts are worthy of notice," repeated the Abbé, "worthy of the most careful attention. But one must be able to suspend judgment, and not rush to premature conclusions. Let us not, like the unbelievers, form hasty conclusions, prompted by passion. In the matter of miracles, the Church exercises the greatest caution; she requires proofs, indisputable proofs."

M. Lerond asked whether it were possible to obtain the photographs which portrayed the image of the Blessed Virgin in the eyes of little Honorine Porrichet, and the Duke promised to write on the subject to the photographer, whose studio, he thought, was in the Place Saint-Exupère.

"Anyhow," put in Madame de Brécé, "little Honorine is a very good, nice little girl. She must be under the special protection of Providence, for her parents, who are overcome with illness and want,

have abandoned her. I have made inquiries, and understand that her conduct is good."

"That is more than can be said of all the village girls of her age," added the dowager duchess.

"That is only too true," said the Duke. "The peasant classes are growing more and more demoralised. I will tell you of some terrible instances, General, but as for little Honorine, she is innocence itself."

While the foregoing conversation was being held on the threshold of the church, Honorine had rejoined Isidore in the copses of La Guerche. He was lying on a bed of dead leaves, waiting impatiently, partly because he thought she would bring him something to eat, or some coppers, partly because he loved her, for she was his sweetheart. It was he who had seen the ladies and gentlemen from the château on their way to the church, and had immediately sought out Honorine, to give her time to reach the church before them, and to fall into a trance.

"What have they given you?" he demanded. "Let me see."

And, as she had brought nothing, he struck her, but without hurting her very much. In return she scratched and bit him, then said:

"What's that for?"

"Swear that they didn't give you anything!" he said.

She swore, and, having sucked away the blood that was trickling down their thin arms, they were reconciled. Then, for the want of something better to do, they fell back upon the pleasure that each was able to bestow upon the other.

Isidore, whose mother was a widow, a bad woman given to drink, had no recognised father. He spent all his time in the woods, and nobody bothered about him. Although he was two years younger than Honorine, he was well versed in the practices of love, about the only need in his life of which he found no lack, under the trees of La Guerche, Lénonville, and Brécé. His love-making with Honorine was only by way of killing time, and for want of something better to do. Occasionally Honorine would be roused to a certain amount of interest, but she could not attach much importance to such commonplace, everyday actions, and a rabbit, a bird, or an uncommon-looking insect, would often be enough to change the entire current of their thoughts.

M. de Brécé returned to the château with his guests. The cold walls of the hall bristled with the evidences of massacre; antlers of deer, heads of young stags and of old veterans, which, in spite of

the taxidermist's care, were moth-eaten, and retained in their staring glass eyes something of the agonised sweat of a creature at bay, equivalent to human tears.

Horns, antlers, bleached bones, severed heads, trophies, by means of which the victims honoured their illustrious slayers, the noblemen of France, and Bourbons of Naples and Spain. Under the great staircase stood a sort of amphibious chariot, shaped like a boat, the body of which could be removed, and was used for the purpose of crossing rivers when hunting. It was looked upon as sacred, because it had once been used by exiled kings.

The Abbé Guitrel carefully placed his big cotton umbrella beneath the black visage of a ferocious wild boar, and led the way through a door on the left, flanked by two tortured-looking caryatides by Ducereau, to a drawing-room, where the three Brécé ladies, who had been the first to return, were already sitting with their friend and neighbour, Madame de Courtrai.

Dressed in black, owing to the interminable series of deaths in their own and the Royal Family, they sat there, unlike and rustic in their extreme simplicity, chatting of marriages and deaths, of illnesses and their remedies.

On the painted ceiling above them, and on the panelled walls, amid the sombre rows of portraits,

one caught an occasional glimpse of a grey-bearded Henri IV in the embrace of a full-bosomed Minerva; or the pale face of Louis XIII in close juxtaposition to the heavy Flemish figures of Victory and Mercy in loosely flowing robes; or, again, the naked body, brick-red in hue, of an old man, Father Time, sparing the fleurs de lis; and anywhere and everywhere the dimpled legs of little boys supporting the Brécé coat of arms with the three golden torches.

All the while the dowager duchess was busy knitting black woollen scarves for the poor. Since those far off days when she had embroidered a counterpane for the bed at Chambord on which the king was to sleep, she had knitted continuously, occupying her hands, and satisfying her heart withal.

The tables and consoles were covered with photographs, in frames of all colours and sizes, some resembling easels, some of porcelain or plush, others of crystal, nickel, shagreen, carved wood or stamped leather-work. There were some, again, like gilded horse-shoes, others like palettes covered with colours and brushes, some shaped like chestnut leaves or butterflies.

In this assortment of frames were portraits of men, women, and children, relations by blood or by marriage; of princes belonging to the house of Bourbon, of Church dignitaries, of the Comte de Chambord, and Pope Pius IX. On the right of the

fire-place in the middle of an old console supported by gilded Turks, like a spiritual father, Monseigneur Charlot smiled all over his broad face at the young soldiers grouped closely around him, officers, brigadiers, and privates, wearing upon their heads, their necks, and their breasts all the martial decoration allowed by a democratic army to her cavalry. He smiled at young men dressed in cycling or polo kit; he smiled at young girls. Ladies covered the folding tables, ladies of all ages, some of them with the decided features of men, but a few among them quite pretty.

" 'Mame' de Courtrai!" cried M. de Brécé, as he entered the room behind the General. "How are you, dear 'Mame'?"

He then returned to the conversation he had commenced with M. Lerond in the park, and drawing him aside to one of the corners of the huge room, he concluded:

"For, when all's said and done, the Army is all that is left us. All that formerly made up the glory and strength of France has vanished, leaving us the Army alone. The Republican Parliament has overthrown the Government, compromised the magistracy, and corrupted public life. The Army alone rears its head above the ruins. That is why I insist that to meddle with it is nothing short of sacrilege."

He stopped. He was never in the habit of grappling with any question, and usually contented himself with generalities. The nobility of his sentiments was contested by none.

Madame de Courtrai, who until then had been lost in reflection as to the best way of preparing cooling draughts, suddenly looked up, turning her old gamekeeper's face to the Duke, and remarked:

"I do trust you have written to the proprietors of that paper which is in league with the enemies of France and the Army, saying that you intend to discontinue it. My husband sent back the number containing that article. You know the one I mean—that disgraceful article."

"My nephew writes to me," replied the Duke, "that a notice has been posted up at his club, insisting that the subscription to it shall be given up, and I hear that signatures are coming in thick and fast. Nearly all the members fall in with the suggestion, reserving the right to buy any single number."

"The Army is above all attack," said M. Lerond.

General Cartier de Chalmot at length broke the silence, in which, until then, he had been wrapped:

"I like to hear you say that. And if, like myself, you had spent the greater part of your life among soldiers, you would be agreeably surprised to note the qualities of endurance, good discipline, and good temper, which make of the French trooper a first-

class implement of war. I never tire of repeating it: such units are equal to any task. With the authority of an officer whose life's career is drawing to a close, I maintain that any one who takes the trouble to inquire into the spirit which animates the French Army will find it worthy of the highest praise. In the same way, it is a pleasure to me to testify to the persevering effort of several officers of high standing and great capacity who have devoted much time and thought to the organisation of the Army, and I declare that their efforts have been crowned with brilliant success."

In a lower and more serious voice he added:

"All that now remains for me to say is, that as far as the men are concerned, quality is to be preferred to quantity, and what should be aimed at is the formation of crack corps. I feel certain that no capable officer would contradict such an assertion. My last military will and testament is contained in this formula: 'Quantity is nothing, quality is everything.' I might add that unity of command is indispensable to an army, and that a great body of men must obey one unique, sovereign, and immutable will, and one only."

He ceased speaking, his pale eyes full of tears. Confused, inexplicable feelings filled the soul of the honest, simple-minded old man, who in former days had been the most dashing captain of the

Imperial Guard. His health was failing, his strength exhausted, and he felt himself lost amongst the officers of the modern school, whom he could not understand.

Madame de Courtrai, who did not care for theories, turned her fierce, masculine old face towards the General:

"Well, General, as, thank God, the Army is respected by every one, as you say it is the only force that keeps us together, why should it not also rule us? Why not send a colonel with his regiment to the Palais Bourbon and the Élysée——?"

She stopped short, as she saw the clouded brow of the General.

The Duke beckoned to M. Lerond.

"You have never seen the library, have you, M. Lerond? I will show it to you. You are fond of old books, and I am sure you will be interested."

Traversing a long, bare gallery, the ceiling of which was covered with clumsy painting, depicting Louis XIII and Apollo destroying the enemies of the kingdom, as represented by Furies and Hydras, they arrived at a door through which the Duke ushered the counsel for the defence of the religious communities into the room where, in 1605, Duc Guy, Grand-Marshal of France and governor of the province, had founded the library for the solace of his declining years and fortunes.

It was a square room, occupying the whole of the ground floor of the west wing, lighted on the north, west, and south, by three uncurtained windows, offering three charming and magnificent pictures to the eye. Stretching away to the south was the lawn, in the centre of which was a marble vase, with a pair of ring-doves perching upon it. The trees of the park were visible, bared by the winter of their leaves, and in the purple depths of the dark walk glimmered the white statues of the pool of Galatea. To the west was a stretch of flat country, a wide expanse of sky, and the setting sun, which, like a mythological egg of light and of gold, had broken and spread its glory over the clouds. To the north were the ploughed red earth of the hills, the slate roofs and distant smoke of Brécé, and the delicate pointed steeple of the little church standing out in the cold, clear light.

A Louis XIV table, two chairs, and a seventeenth-century globe with a wind-rose relating to the unexplored regions of the Pacific comprised the only furniture of this severe-looking room, the walls of which were lined from floor to ceiling with book-cases, enclosed by wire gratings. Even upon the red marble mantelpiece the grey-painted shelves encroached, and through the mesh of gilded wire peeped the richly decorated backs of ancient volumes.

"The library was founded by the Marshal," said M. de Brécé. "His grandson, Duc Jean, added many treasures to it during the reign of Louis XIV, and it was he who fitted it up as you see it to-day. It has not been much altered since."

"Have you a catalogue?" inquired M. Lerond.

The Duke said that he had not, that M. de Terremondre, who was a great lover of valuable books, had warmly recommended him to have them catalogued, but he had never yet found time to have it done.

He opened one of the cases, and M. Lerond drew out several volumes in succession, octavo, quarto, and folio, bound in marbled, stippled or tree-calf, parchment, and red and blue morocco, all bearing on their covers the coat of arms with the three torches surmounted by a ducal crown. M. Lerond was not a keen book-lover, but on opening a beautifully written manuscript on Royal Tithes, presented to the Marshal by Vauban, his astonishment and admiration knew no bounds.

The manuscript was further embellished with a frontispiece, besides several vignettes and tail-pieces.

"Are these original drawings?" asked M. Lerond.

"Very probably," replied M. de Brécé.

"They are signed," went on M. Lerond, "and I think I can decipher the name of Sebastian Leclerc."

"Maybe," answered M. de Brécé.

These priceless shelves contained, as M. Lerond remarked, books by Tillemont on Roman and Church history, the statute book of the province, and innumerable *Fædera* by old doctors at law; he unearthed works on theology, on controversy, and on hagiology, long genealogical histories, old editions of Greek and Latin classics, and some of those enormous books, bigger than atlases, written on the occasion of the marriage of a king or his entry into Paris, or to celebrate his convalescence or his victories.

"This is the oldest part of the library," said M. de Brécé, "the Marshal's collection. Here," he added, opening two or three other cases, "are the additions of Duc Jean."

"Louis XVI's minister, surnamed the 'Good Duke'?" asked M. Lerond.

"Just so," replied M. de Brécé.

Duc Jean's collection took up all that side of the wall containing the mantelpiece and also the side looking out upon the little town. M. Lerond read out the titles stamped in gold between two bands, that decorated the backs of the volumes: *Encyclopédie méthodique; Œuvres de Montesquieu; Œuvres de Voltaire; Œuvres de Rousseau, de*

l'abbé Mably, de Condillac; and *Histoire des Établissements Européens dans les Indes,* by Raynal. He then glanced through the lesser poets and romancers with the vignettes of Grécourt, Dorat, and Saint-Lambert; the Boccaccio illustrated by Marillier, and the edition of La Fontaine, published by the "Fermiers Généraux."

"The pictures are rather free," remarked the Duke. "I have been compelled to destroy certain works of the same period, the illustrations of which were really licentious."

M. Lerond, however, discovered, side by side with these frivolous books, a lengthy series of political and philosophical works, essays on slavery, printed accounts of the American War of Independence. He opened *Vœux d'un solitaire,* and saw that the margins were covered with notes in Duc Jean's handwriting. He read aloud:

"The author is right; man is naturally good, and the mistaken social laws alone are responsible for his evil deeds."

"That," he added, "is what your great-great-grandfather wrote in 1790."

"How very curious!" remarked the Duke, replacing the book upon its shelf. Then, opening the cases upon the north side of the room, he said:

"These are the books collected by my grandfather, who was page to Charles X."

Here M. Lerond discovered, bound in sombre sheepskin, tan calf and black shagreen, the works of Chateaubriand, a series of "Mémoires" on the Revolution, the Histories of Anquetil, Guizot, and Augustin Thierry; La Harpe's *Cours de littérature,* Marchangy's *Gaule poétique,* and the *Discours* of Lainé.

Close to this literature dealing with the Restoration, and the Government of July, was a shelf on which lay two or three tattered papers on Pope Pius IX and temporal power, a few dilapidated novels, a pamphlet in praise of Joan of Arc, which had been read by Monseigneur Charlot in the church of Saint-Exupère on the 8th of June, 1890, and a few religious books written for ladies of high degree. This was the contribution of the late Duke, member of the National Assembly in 1871, and of the present Duc de Brécé, to the library created by the marshal in 1605.

"I must lock up these books," said M. de Brécé. "I cannot be too careful, for my sons are growing up, and at any moment may be seized with the desire to come and examine the library for themselves. There are books among these which should never fall into the hands of any young man, nor of any self-respecting woman, no matter what her age may be."

And so, in his honest zeal for doing good, and in

the happy conviction that he was imprisoning lust, doubt, impiety, and evil thoughts, he turned his key upon them; and this sentiment, which, when analysed, had its share of simple complacency and the secret jealousy of an ignorant man, was not without its beauty and purity also.

Having thrust the bunch of keys into his pocket again, the Duke turned a satisfied countenance to M. Lerond.

"Overhead," he said, "is the King's room. The old inventories give this name to all the upper story. The room properly so-called, however, contains the bed in which Louis XIII slept, and it is still hung with the same silk embroidery. It is well worth a visit."

M. Lerond was so tired that he could hardly stand. His legs, accustomed all the year round to be tucked away under a desk, had had hard work to carry him through the walk on the slippery paths of the park, the tramp round the stables, and the stroll along the woods to the church; they felt limp and weak, and his feet were hot and painful, for the poor man, anxious to do the right thing, had, unfortunately, put on patent-leather boots. Casting an uneasy glance at the ceiling, he stammered:

"It grows late. Would it not be better to join the ladies in the drawing-room?"

M. de Brécé was only adamant with regard to the

visit to the stables; as far as the remainder of his property was concerned he was reasonable enough.

"Yes, the light is going," he said. "We will see the rest another time. To the right, M. Lerond; to the right, please."

"What walls!" cried the ex-deputy, as he reached the doorway. "What tremendously thick walls!"

His thin face, the calm and cold expression of which had not altered one whit at the sight of the hunting trophies in the hall, the historic paintings in the drawing-room, the rich tapestries, the magnificent ceiling of the gallery, and the beautiful books with their tooled morocco bindings, now grew animated, interested, and full of admiration. He had at last discovered something to stir and amaze him, something which afforded him both food for thought and mental satisfaction—a wall! His legal mind, struck down in its flower at the time of the new regulations, and his heart, too soon bereaved of the joy of administering punishment, rejoiced at the sight of a wall, a deaf, dumb, sombre thing, which recalled to his eager mind thoughts of prison cells, of sentences and public prosecutions, of codes, laws, justice, and morals—a wall!

"Yes," replied the Duke, "the wall at this particular spot between the gallery and the next wing

is tremendously thick. It is the outer wall of the old castle, built in 1405."

M. Lerond gazed lingeringly at the wall, measured it with his eyes, felt it with his little, crooked, yellow hands, studied, worshipped, loved, and possessed it.

"Mesdames," he said to the ladies on his return to the drawing-room, "the Duke has very kindly shown me his wonderful library. On my way back I noticed the remarkable wall that separates the gallery from the wing. I don't think there is anything to equal it even at Chambord."

But neither the Brécé ladies nor Madame de Courtrai was listening; their united attention was given to another matter.

"Jean," cried the Duchess to her husband, "Jean, look at this!" And she pointed to a red leather case lying on the table near the lamp which a servant had just brought in. The case was round in shape, topped with a kind of knob like a thimble, and divided at the base in the shape of a clover leaf. A visiting card lay beside it. All around the table were heaps of tissue paper, that made one think of little white dogs tied up with pale blue ribbon.

"Do look, Jean!"

The Abbé Guitrel, who was standing near the table, opened the case with reverent hands, and displayed a golden ciborium.

"Who sent it?" asked M. de Brécé.

"Look at the card. I am horribly worried—I don't know what to do."

M. de Brécé put on his glasses, picked up the card, and read aloud:

BARONNE JULES DE BONMONT.
For Notre-Dame-des-Belles-Feuilles

He replaced the card upon the table, took off his glasses and murmured:

"How very annoying!"

"A ciborium, a beautiful ciborium," said the Abbé.

"When I used to sing in the choir as a boy," said the General, "I always heard the Fathers call it a custodial."

"Yes, you can call it either a custodial or a ciborium," replied the Abbé. "These are the names given to the receptacles which hold the reserved Eucharist. But the custodial is formed like a cylinder and has a conical cover."

With frowning brow M. de Brécé stood wrapped in thought; then with a deep sigh he said:

"Why should Madame de Bonmont, who is a Jewess, give a ciborium to Notre-Dame-des-Belles-Feuilles? Why have these people a mania for forcing themselves into our churches?"

The Abbé Guitrel, with his fingers thrust into the

sleeves of his coat, moistened his lips and said gently:

"Allow me to point out, Monsieur, that Madame Jules de Bonmont is a Catholic."

"Nonsense!" cried the Duke. "She is an Austrian Jewess, and her maiden name was Wallstein. The real name of her late husband, the Baron de Bonmont, was Gutenberg."

"Allow me, Monsieur," said the Abbé. "I do not deny that the Baronne de Bonmont is of Jewish descent. What I mean is that she has been converted and baptised, and is therefore a Christian. She is a good Christian, I might add, and gives largely to our charities, in fact, she is an example to——"

"I am acquainted with your ideas," interrupted the Duke, "and I respect them as I respect your cloth. But to me a converted Jew remains a Jew; I cannot make any distinction between the two."

"Neither can I," said Madame de Brécé.

"To a certain extent your feelings are legitimate, Madame la Duchesse," replied the Abbé. "But you cannot be unaware of the teaching of the Church, that the curse pronounced against the Jews was inspired by their crime, and not their race, and that therefore the attendant results cannot affect them if——"

"It *is* heavy," said the Duke, lifting the ciborium from its case, and holding it out.

"I am most annoyed," said the Duchess.

"It is *very* heavy!" repeated the Duke.

"And, what is more," added the Abbé, "it is a beautiful piece of work, and possesses the refined characteristics which are, so to speak, the seal and stamp of the work of Rondonneau the younger. None but the Archbishop's goldsmith could have displayed such judgment in the selection of a model from traditional Christian art, or have reproduced the shape and decoration with such skill and fidelity. This ciborium is a work of the highest merit, and is in the style of the thirteenth century."

"The bowl and cover are in solid gold," said M. de Brécé.

"According to liturgical regulations the bowl of the ciborium must be of gold, or, at any rate, of silver, gilded inside," said the Abbé.

M. de Brécé, who was holding it upside down, remarked:

"The foot is hollow."

"That's a good thing!" cried the Duchess.

The Abbé Guitrel looked lovingly at the work of Rondonneau the younger.

"There is no doubt about it," he said, "it is thirteenth century, and a better period could not have been selected. The thirteenth century is the golden age of this particular kind of work. At that epoch the ciborium was made in the beautiful shape of a

pomegranate, which you recognise in this delicious example. The firm, strong foot is further enriched with enamels and inset with precious stones."

"Mercy upon us! precious stones!" cried the Duchess.

"Figures of angels and prophets are finely chased on the lozenge-shaped panels, giving the most delightful effect to the whole."

"That Bonmont was a rogue," said Madame de Courtrai suddenly. "He was a thief; and his widow has not yet made restitution."

"You see that she is beginning to do so, however," said the Duke, pointing to the shining ciborium.

"What shall we do?" asked the Duchess.

"We cannot return her gift," said the Duke.

"Why not?" asked his mother.

"Well, mother, because it is impossible."

"Then we've got to keep it?" asked the Duchess.

"Well—yes, I suppose so."

"And thank her?"

"What else can we do?"

"Don't you agree with me, General?"

"It would have been fitter," said the General, "if this lady, who is a stranger to you, had refrained from making you a present. But there is no reason to respond to her civility with an insult."

Taking the ciborium in his venerable hands, the Abbé Guitrel said:

"Notre-Dame-des-Belles-Feuilles will, I feel sure, look with kindness upon this gift, presented by a pious soul to the tabernacle of her altar."

"But, hang it all," put in the Duke, "I am Notre-Dame-des-Belles-Feuilles in this case. If Madame de Bonmont and young Bonmont want to be invited to my house—and they certainly will want to—I shall be obliged to receive them now."

CHAPTER III

IN their efforts to escape the sudden shower that had overtaken them outside the ramparts of the castle, Madame Jules de Bonmont and Madame Hortha ran along the sentry path up to the gate house, upon the debased vault of which could be seen the peacock, emblem of the extinct house of Paves. M. de Terremondre and Baron Wallstein soon caught them up, and the four of them stood still, trying to regain their breath.

"Where is the Abbé?" asked Madame de Bonmont. "Arthur, did you leave the Abbé sheltering by the hedge?"

Baron Wallstein told his sister that the Abbé was coming along behind them.

And soon they saw the Abbé Guitrel walking up the stone steps, damp but cheerful. He alone had managed to display a perfect dignity at the sudden alarm, and had preserved the calm suitable to his years and his corpulence; he had, in fact, maintained a truly episcopal solemnity.

The race had deepened the roses in Madame de

Bonmont's cheeks; her full bosom rose and fell under her light blouse, as she stood drawing her skirts tightly around her plump hips. In her rich maturity, with her disordered hair, lustrous eyes, and ripe lips—a sort of Viennese Erigone—she reminded one of a golden cluster of juicy grapes.

"Are you wet, M. l'Abbé?" she inquired, in that rather coarse voice of hers, so much less sweet than her lips.

The Abbé removed his wide-brimmed hat, the dusty pile of which was spotted with rain, looked with his little grey eyes at each member of the breathless group scared by a few drops of rain, and replied, not without a certain gentle slyness:

"I am wet, but not out of breath," adding, "It's nothing but a harmless shower, the rain has not even penetrated my coat."

"Let us go in," said Madame de Bonmont.

This was her home, this château of Montil, built in 1508 by Bernard de Paves, Grand-Master of Artillery, for Nicolette de Vaucelles, his fourth wife.

"The house of Paves flourished for nine hundred years," writes Perrin du Verdier, in the first volume of his *Trésor des généalogies.* "And the Royal Families of Europe were all connected by marriage at some time or other with the said house, more especially the kings of Spain, England, Sicily and Jerusalem, the dukes of Brittany, Alençon, Vendôme,

and others, as well as the Orsini, the Colonnas and the Cornaros." And Perrin du Verdier discourses both lengthily and complacently on the celebrity of this "tant inclite maison" which gave to the Church eighteen cardinals and two popes, and to the throne of France three constables, six marshals and a king's mistress.

From the reign of Louis XII down to the Revolution the heads of the elder branch of Paves had resided at the château of Montil. Philippe VIII, prince of Paves, lord of Montil, Toche, Les Ponts, Rougeain, La Victoire, Berlogue, and other places, first Lord in Waiting to the King, was the last of that branch of the family. He died in 1795, in London, whither he had emigrated, to set up as a perruquier in a little shop in Whitecross Street. His estates, which had been totally neglected during his lifetime, were, at the time of the Directoire, sold as national property, and divided among a number of peasants who lived there, and founded a line of bourgeois. The rogues who had acquired the château in exchange for a mere handful of paper money, decided in 1813 to demolish it. However, soon after the destruction of the Galerie des Faunes, their work of demolition was interrupted and never completed. For two years the country people helped themselves, when so inclined, to the lead roofing of the château. In 1815 M. de Reu, an old

officer of the King's navy and a secret agent of the Comte de Provence in Holland—it is said that he was also an accomplice of George in the affair of the Rue Saint-Nicaise—desirous of ending his days in his native country, managed to extort a few hundred crowns from the ungrateful Prince, and purchased the château of Montil.

There, poor and unsociable, he with his eleven children, both legitimate and illegitimate, lived within the walls which threatened to fall in and bury them all beneath the ruins. After his death, one of his daughters, who never married, lived there, and filled those halls of beauty and glory with plums picked in the castle gardens, which she placed there to dry. In the year 1875 Mademoiselle Reu, aged ninety-nine years and three months, was found one winter's morning lying dead upon a torn and rotting mattress, in the room adorned with monograms, devices, and emblems in the honour of Nicolette de Vaucelles.

At this time Baron Jules de Bonmont, son of Nathan, son of Seligmann, son of Simon, came over from Austria, where he had negotiated the loans during the dark days of the Empire. He now made France the headquarters of his financial operations, bringing to the Republic the benefit of his financial genius. M. Laprat-Teulet, a member of Parliament, who at that time represented the district of

Montil, became one of the first and surest of his friends and allies. He discovered that, the era of ideas and strife having gone by, the time had come for big business deals. He bestowed upon the Baron his warmest sympathy and his extremely useful devotion, and the Baron, on his side, was always ready to commend Laprat-Teulet as a clever fellow.

It was by the advice of Laprat-Teulet that Baron Jules bought the château of Montil. It was then a dignified and beautiful ruin, well worth restoring and preserving. The task of its restoration was confided to a pupil of Viollet-le-Duc, M. Quatrebarbe, the diocesan architect. He removed all the old stone and replaced it with new. In the new building the Baron, who astonished his political friends by his taste in art, promptly installed his collection of pictures, furniture, and armoury, all of which were of enormous value.

"And thus the château of Montil," to use the words of M. de Terremondre, "was preserved to the lovers of our national art, and transformed into a marvellous museum by the care and generosity of a great seignior, who, at the same time, was a great connoisseur."

The Baron was not long permitted to enjoy the proud possession of Montil, with its towers ornamented with medallions, its tracery staircase, and the delicately carved woodwork of its interior.

After reaching the zenith of his financial prosperity, he died suddenly of an attack of apoplexy, just on the eve of all the ruin and scandal that followed. He died in possession of all his wealth, leaving behind him a gay young widow, and a boy, who, with his short, squat figure, lowering brows, and already pitiless heart, closely resembled his father. Madame de Bonmont had kept Montil, of which she was very fond.

She led Madame Hortha to the spiral staircase, the interlacing stonework of which repeated interminably in its intertwinings the emblematic peacock of Bernard de Paves tied by the foot to the lute of Nicolette de Vaucelles. Then, picking up her skirts with a sudden, abrupt gesture, not without a charm of its own, she followed her. M. de Terremondre, President of the Archæological Society, and formerly a great lady-killer, came closely behind her with an eye upon the rhythmic movement of her engaging figure.

At the age of forty she had retained the wish and the capacity to please, and M. de Terremondre thoroughly appreciated this, for he was a susceptible man; yet he did not attempt to make love to her, knowing that she herself was greatly infatuated with Raoul Marcien, a handsome, choleric man who had fallen into disrepute.

"Let us go into the armoury," said Madame de

Bonmont, pushing open the door. "It is warmed with hot-air pipes."

It was true that the armoury was so heated. Amidst the grotesque encaustic tiles of M. Quatrebarbe, designed after the manner of the old paving he had torn up, the hot-air gratings opened their bright brazen mouths.

Madame de Bonmont was careful to invite the Abbé Guitrel to a seat near one of the radiators, and to ask him if his feet were damp, and whether he would not have a glass of something hot.

Under the ribbed vault of its roof, the huge room glittered with a display of iron and steel such as not even the Armeria in Madrid could boast. One or two of the financier's brilliant business coups had resulted in a collection of armour not to be equalled by that of Spitzer himself.

Examples of the three centuries of plate armour were there in every form known to Europe. On the gigantic chimney-piece, guarded by two Brabançons in magnificent cuisses, a condottiere's suit of mail bestrode that of a horse, with open chamfron, horse muzzle, mane-guard, tail-guard, and poitrel. The walls were covered from floor to ceiling with dazzling suits of armour, casques, basinets, helmets, salades, morions, skull caps, iron hats, hauberks, coats of armour, brigantines, greaves, solerets, and spurs.

From the shields, bucklers, and targes, of all descriptions, radiated flambergs, Konigsmark swords, partisans, gisarmes, war-scythes, two-edged swords, Toledo rapiers, poniards, stylets, and daggers.

All around the room stood phantom figures clothed in polished and unpolished steel; in steel, engraved, inlaid, chased, and damascened. Maximiliennes with fluted and bowed cuirasses, puffed and bell-shaped suits of armour, the "polichinelle" of Henri III, and the "écrevisse" of Louis XIII. Panoplies of war that had adorned French, Spanish, Italian, German, and English princes; coats of mail worn by knights, captains, sergeants, crossbowmen, reiters, veterans, by soldiers of fortune from every country in Europe, by mercenaries and Switzers.

Here was steel armour that had figured at the Field of the Cloth of Gold; at the jousts and tourneys of England, France, and Germany; armour from Poitiers, Verneuil, Granson, Fornovo, Ceresole, Pavia, Ravenna, Pultava, and Culloden; worn by nobles or mercenaries, by knights or caitiffs, by victor or vanquished, by friend or foe—all collected by the Baron and displayed in this room.

After dinner, while pouring out the coffee, Madame de Bonmont offered no sugar to the Abbé, who always took it, and gave it to Baron Wallstein, who suffered from diabetes and had to be very care-

ful in his diet. She did not do this with any malice aforethought, but her mind was full of other matters that engaged her undivided attention. Her depression, which, simple soul that she was, she was incapable of hiding, was caused by a telegram from Paris, worded with a twofold meaning; one literal and commonplace, obvious to all, referring to a delay in forwarding some plants; the other, the real and ingenious one, understood, to her unhappiness, by herself alone, indicated that her lover could not come to Montil but was in dire straits and forced to remain in Paris.

It was nothing new for Raoul Marcien to be in need of money. Since he attained his majority, fifteen years previously, he had just managed to keep himself going by a series of bold and clever *coups*. But this year, his difficulties, which had continued to increase and multiply, were positively appalling.

Madame de Bonmont was nearly always worried and depressed about him and his affairs, for she loved him truly and tenderly with all her soul and with all her body.

"Two lumps for you, M. de Terremondre?"

Yes, she adored her Raoul, her Rara, with all the strength of her placid soul. She would have liked him to be loving and faithful, pure-minded and studious. He was not what she wished him to be, and in her grief and fear of losing him, she regularly

burned candles for his benefit in the church of Saint-Antoine.

M. de Terremondre, who was by way of being a connoisseur, examined the pictures. They were all modern works of art, paintings by Daubigny, Theodore Rousseau, Jules Dupré, Chintreuil, Diaz, and Corot, and consisted of mournful-looking pools bordered by deep woods, dew-brushed meadows, village streets, forest glades bathed in the golden light of the setting sun, and willows emerging from the silver mists of morning. The prevailing tones were white, fawn, green, blue, and grey. In massive gilt frames they stood out against the crimson damask hangings that accorded ill with the gigantic Renaissance chimney-piece, with the loves of the nymphs and the metamorphoses of the gods sculptured in the stone. The pictures undoubtedly marred the effect of the wonderful old ceiling, the painted compartments of which reproduced in infinite variety the peacock of Bernard de Paves tied by the foot to the lute of Nicolette de Vaucelles.

"That's a fine Millet," said M. de Terremondre, coming to a standstill before a goosegirl, whose figure stood out, terrible in its rustic solemnity, against a background of pale gold.

"It's a pretty picture," answered Baron Wallstein. "I have the same thing at my house in Vienna, but mine is a shepherd, not a goosegirl. I don't

know what my brother gave for this one." Cup in hand, he began to stroll round the gallery. "This Jules Dupré cost my brother-in-law 50,000 francs; this Theodore Rousseau 60,000 and this Corot 100,000."

"I am acquainted with the views of the late Baron in regard to pictures," replied M. de Terremondre, following the Baron round the room. "One day he met me going down the staircase of the Hôtel des Ventes, with a little picture under my arm. He caught hold of my sleeve, as he was fond of doing, and said, 'What are you carrying off there?' With the satisfied pride of the complacent dabbler in art I replied, 'A Ruisdael, M. de Bonmont, a genuine Ruisdael. It has been engraved and I happen to have a print in my portfolio.' 'What did you give for your Ruisdael?' 'The sale was in a dark room on the ground floor and the dealer did not know what he was selling. Thirty francs!' "

" 'What a pity! What a pity!' he ejaculated, and, seeing my surprise, gave another tug at my sleeve. 'My dear M. de Terremondre, you ought to have given 10,000 francs for it; if you had paid as much as that it would have been worth 30,000 francs to you. The little picture only cost you thirty francs and will never fetch a high price, say twenty-five louis at the most. The value of a thing cannot

rise at a jump from thirty francs to 30,000!' Ah!" concluded M. de Terremondre, "the Baron was a clever man!"

"He was indeed," replied Wallstein, "and he also liked taking a rise out of people."

The two cronies looked up, and saw, right before their eyes, the very Baron they had been discussing, the man who had been so clever all his life. There he was, painted by Delaunay, amongst a lot of costly pictures, his cunning animal-like face leering out of a glittering frame.

Madame de Bonmont and the Abbé, seated together in the huge chimney corner before the fire, were chatting about the weather and day-dreaming. Madame de Bonmont was thinking how sweet life might be, if only Rara willed it so. She loved him so simply and so ingenuously. All the ancient and modern moralists, all the fathers of the Church, the doctors and theologians, the Abbé Guitrel and Monseigneur Charlot, the Pope and the whole of the Church Council, the archangel Michael with his great trumpet, and Christ come again in His glory to judge both the quick and the dead—all of them put together would never have succeeded in making her believe that it was a sin for her to love Rara. She was thinking that she would not see him at Montil, and that perhaps, at that very moment, he was unfaithful to her. She knew he was almost

as familiar with women as he was with the bailiffs; she had seen him at the races with ladies of easy virtue and uncertain age, at whom he had cast leering glances as he handed them the field-glasses or helped them on with their cloaks. The poor dear could not get rid of a whole host of tiresome people, to whom he was bound for reasons she found it impossible to understand, even when he explained them at length. She felt very unhappy and heaved a deep sigh.

The Abbé was thinking of the bishopric of Tourcoing. His rival, the Abbé Lantaigne, was done for. He was going under in the ruin of his seminary, smothered beneath bills of the butcher Lafolie. But there were many rivals in the field. A senior curate from Paris and a curé from Lyons seemed to be the Government favourites; the Nunciature as usual lay low. The Abbé Guitrel heaved a sigh.

Hearing the sigh, Madame de Bonmont, who was very kind-hearted, reproached herself for selfishly thinking of her own affairs. She made an effort to appear interested in the Abbé Guitrel's concerns, and affectionately inquired whether he would not soon be made a bishop.

"You are a candidate for Tourcoing," she said. "Would you not dislike living in so small a town?"

The Abbé declared that the care of his flock would

be sufficient to occupy him, and that, moreover, the diocese of Tourcoing was one of the oldest and most important in Northern France. "It is the see," he added, "of the blessed St. Loup, the apostle of Flanders."

"Indeed?" remarked Madame de Bonmont.

"We must be careful," went on the Abbé, "not to confound St. Loup, the apostle of Flanders, with St. Loup, Bishop of Lyons, St. Leu or Loup, Bishop of Sens, and St. Loup, Bishop of Troyes. The latter had been married seven years to Pimentola, a sister of the Bishop of Arles, when he left her, to retire in solitude to Lerins and devote himself entirely to works of ascetic piety."

And Madame de Bonmont was thinking:

"He's been losing heavily again. In one way it is good for him, because he has been winning too frequently at the club lately, and people were getting suspicious. On the other hand it's a great nuisance. I shall have to pay up."

And Madame de Bonmont was much annoyed at having to pay Rara's debts. In the first place she never liked paying and, in the second, she disliked lending money to Rara as much as a matter of principle as from fear of not being loved for herself alone. At the same time she knew that when she saw her Rara, gloomy and terrible, tying a wet towel round his fevered cranium—which was beginning to

be discernible through the fast-thinning hair—and when she heard the poor darling crying amidst a torrent of blasphemies that the only thing for him to do was to blow out his brains, she knew she would have to pay. You see Rara was a man of honour; in fact, he lived on honour; since he had left the Army his profession had been that of witness or umpire, and, in the smartest circles, no duel ever took place without his presence.

And to think that she would have to part with more money. If only he belonged entirely to her and was loving and attentive. As it was, he was in a perpetual state of agitation, desperation, and fury, and always seemed like a man laying about him in the thick of a fight.

"The saint of whom I am speaking, Madame la Baronne," went on the Abbé, "the blessed St. Loup, or Lupus, preached the gospel in Flanders, and his apostolic labours were often fraught with many trials. In his biography we find an instance which will touch you by its naïve beauty. One frosty day in winter he was traversing the frozen countryside, and stopped at the house of a senator to warm himself. The latter, who was entertaining some of his boon companions, continued to hold unseemly conversation with them in the presence of the apostle. St. Loup made an attempt to stop the conversation. 'My sons,' said he to the senator and his guests, 'are

you not aware that on the day of judgment you will have to answer for every vain speech you have uttered? Treating the exhortations of the holy man with contempt, however, they returned with redoubled zest to their indecent and impious talk. Shaking the dust from off his feet, the blessed saint said to them, 'I desired to warm my tired body against the bitter cold, but your sinful talk forces me, though still numb with cold, to quit your company.' "

Madame de Bonmont was sadly reflecting that lately, with teeth set and eyes flashing, Rara had been threatening the destruction of the Jews. He had always been against the Jews, and so had she for that matter. However, she preferred not to discuss the subject, and in her opinion Rara, being the lover of a Catholic lady of Jewish origin, was wanting in tact when he swore, as he invariably did, that he would like to rip open every "sheeny" in Christendom. She would have preferred more gentleness and sympathy, calmer views and more amiable desires. As for herself, her thoughts of love were mingled with innocent dreams of sweetmeats and poetry.

"The mission of the blessed St. Loup," continued the Abbé Guitrel, "bore fruit. The inhabitants of Tourcoing were baptised by him, and chose him by acclamation for their bishop. His end was accom-

panied by circumstances which I feel sure will impress you, Madame. One December day, in the year of our Lord 397, St. Loup, then full of years and good deeds, made his way to a tree surrounded by briars, where it was his habit to pray. Fixing two stakes into the ground, he marked out a space as long as his body, and said to the disciples he had asked to accompany him, 'When, by God's will, I end my exile in this world, it is there I desire to be laid.'

"St. Loup died on the Sunday following the day on which he had marked out his last resting-place, and it was done as he had commanded. Blandus came to inter the body of the blessed saint, whom he was afterwards to succeed as Bishop of Tourcoing."

She felt sad and full of compassion. She understood the reason for Rara's anti-Jewish frenzies, and excused them. The fact was that latterly, to re-establish his reputation among his fellows as a man of honour, Rara had warmly espoused the cause of the Army, in which he had formerly served as a cavalry officer. He had greatly tightened the bonds that united him with one great family—the Army, and had even struck a Jew whom he had overheard in a café asking for the Army list.

Madame de Bonmont loved and admired him, but she was far from happy.

Raising her head and opening her flower-like eyes she said:

"The see of the blessed St. Loup, apostle to—— Please go on, M. l'Abbé. I am very interested."

It was Madame de Bonmont's fate to seek, in hearts little fitted to give it her, the sweetness of peaceful love. The sentimental Elizabeth had always bestowed her heart upon arrant adventurers. During her husband's lifetime she had fondly loved the son of an obscure senator, young X——, famous for having appropriated to his own use a whole year's secret funds of a certain government department. Close upon this she had given her confidence to an extremely fascinating man who was one of the bright particular stars of the government press, and who suddenly disappeared from view in a tremendous financial catastrophe. These two, at any rate, had been introduced to her by the Baron himself. You cannot blame a woman if she has lovers belonging to her own set. But her newest, dearest, her one and only love, Raoul Marcien, had not been one of the Baron's friends. He did not belong to the world of sale and barter. She had met him in a most select circle of Catholic Royalist society somewhere in the provinces. He was himself as good as a nobleman. This time she had firmly believed she was going to satisfy her desire for love, and deli-

cate, refined intimacy, that at last she had found the chivalrous lover with noble and beautiful feelings of whom she had so long dreamed.

And now she found that he was like all the others, alternately frozen with fear and burning with rage, torn with anguish of mind and agitated by the extraordinary adventures of a life devoted to fraud and blackmail. But he was so much more picturesque and amusing than any one else! He would, for instance, be summoned as witness in some serious and delicate affair, and at the same time be served with a judgment-summons at his club; or again, he might one day be made Chevalier of the Legion of Honour, and the same morning be haled before the court on a charge of embezzlement. Moreover, with erect carriage, and well-waxed moustache, he defended his honour at the point of his sword. But for some months past he had seemed to be losing his sang-froid; he spoke too loudly, and gesticulated too much, in fact he compromised his case by his desire for vengeance, for he was always complaining of betrayal.

It was with real anxiety that Elizabeth saw Rara's temper grow daily more unmanageable. When she went to see him of a morning she would find him in his shirt-sleeves, bending over his old military trunk crammed full of writs, swearing and blaspheming with crimson face. "Rogues! scoundrels!

scum! wretches!" he would shout, vociferating that they should hear from him to their cost. She would snatch a kiss in the middle of the curses, and be sent away with the usual remark that he would blow out his brains.

No, it was not the love of which Elizabeth had dreamed.

"You were saying, M. l'Abbé, that the blessed St. Loup——?"

But the Abbé, with his head inclined at a gentle angle and hands clasped upon his portly frame, was fast asleep in his chair.

So Madame de Bonmont, who was as kind to herself as she was to others, also fell asleep in her easy chair; fell asleep, thinking that perhaps after all Rara would come to an end of his worries soon, that she might only have to give him quite a little money, and that after all she was beloved by the handsomest of men.

"My dear, my dear," cried the much-travelled Madame Hortha, in her trumpet-like voice, calculated to strike terror into the heart of a Turk, "are we not to see M. Ernest to-night?"

Standing there, with her big limbs and heavy features, she looked like a warrior virgin left behind and forgotten for twenty years in the wings of the theatre at Bayreuth; she was terrible to look upon, clothed and girdled with jet and steel that flashed,

gleamed, and clanked as she moved, but, in spite of it all, quite a good sort of woman, and the mother of numerous children.

Awakened with a start by the magic blast that blared from the bosom of the excellent Madame Hortha, the Baronne replied that her son, who had obtained sick leave, was to arrive that evening at Montil, and the carriage had gone to the station to meet him.

The Abbé Guitrel, whose slumbers, too, had been pierced by this nocturnal flourish of trumpets, adjusted his spectacles, and, moistening his lips, that they might have the necessary unction, murmured with heavenly sweetness:

"Yes, Loup—Loup."

"And so," said Madame de Bonmont, "you will wear the mitre, you will hold the crosier, and have a big ring on your finger."

"I do not know yet, Madame," replied M. Guitrel.

"Yes, yes! You will be appointed!" She leaned forward slightly, and, in a low voice, asked: "Monsieur l'Abbé, must the Bishop's ring be of any particular design?"

"Not exactly, Madame," replied M. Guitrel. "The Bishop wears the ring as a symbol of his spiritual union with the Church; it is therefore fit-

ting that the ring should suggest by its appearance thoughts of austerity and purity."

"Ah!" said Madame de Bonmont. "What about the stone?"

"In the Middle Ages," replied the Abbé, "the bezel was sometimes of gold like the ring, and sometimes consisted of a precious stone. It seems that the amethyst is a very suitable stone with which to adorn the pastoral ring, it gleams with a gentle lustre, and is one of the twelve stones that formed the breastplate worn by the High Priest of the Jews. In Christian symbolism it stands for modesty and humility; Narbode, Bishop of Rennes in the eleventh century, makes it the emblem of those who give themselves to be crucified on the cross of Jesus Christ."

"Indeed!" said Madame de Bonmont.

She had made up her mind that when M. Guitrel became Bishop of Tourcoing she would make him a present of an episcopal ring set with a large amethyst.

Madame Hortha's trumpets again rang out:

"My dear, my dear, are we not to see M. Raoul Marcien to-night? Are we not to have the pleasure of seeing the dear man?"

The cosmopolitan lady was well worthy of admiration, in that, although acquainted with every grade of society under the sun, she avoided making

a hopeless muddle of them all. Her brain was a directory of all the drawing-rooms of all the capitals of Europe, and she was not wanting in a certain worldly judgment; her kindness of heart, too, was universal. If she had mentioned Raoul Marcien, it was in all innocence. She was innocence personified, and knew nothing of evil. She was a good wife and a good mother, whose home was a sleeping-car or a *wagon-lit,* yet a domesticated woman for all that. Under the corsage of jet and steel that glittered as she moved with a sound as of hail, she wore coarse grey cotton stays. Even her lady's-maids never questioned her virtue.

"My dear, my dear, of course you know that M. Raoul Marcien has fought a duel with M. Isidore Mayer?"

And in a voice that made one think of international bureaux and tourist inquiry offices, she related the story which Madame de Bonmont knew by heart.

She told how M. Isidore Mayer, a Jew, both well known and highly respected in the financial world, went into a café in the Boulevard des Capucines, sat down at a table and asked for the Army List. Having a son in the Army, he wished to make sure of the names of the officers in his regiment. Just as he was about to take the book from a waiter M. Raoul Marcien strode up, and said: "Monsieur, I

forbid you to lay a hand on that book. It is sacred to the French Army!" "Why?" asked M. Isidore Mayer. "Because you are of the same religion as the traitor!"

M. Isidore Mayer shrugged his shoulders, upon which M. Raoul Marcien struck him full in the face. An encounter was arranged, and two shots fired without effect.

"My dear, my dear, do you understand why he did it? I must say I do not."

Madame de Bonmont did not reply, and her silence was prolonged by that of M. de Terremondre and Baron Wallstein.

"I believe," said Madame de Bonmont, listening intently to the distant sounds of horses' hoofs and the rumble of wheels, "that Ernest is coming."

At this point a servant came in with the newspapers. M. de Terremondre took one of them and glanced casually at it.

"Still the Affair!" he murmured. "More professors protesting! Why will they insist on meddling with what does not concern them! It is only right that the Army should settle its own affairs, as it always has done. Moreover, it seems to me that when seven officers——"

"Of course," replied the Abbé, "when seven officers have given judgment, I will even go so far as to say that it is unseemly to raise any doubts as

to their decision. It is highly indecorous and incongruous!"

"Are you speaking of the Affair?" asked Madame de Bonmont. "Well, I can assure you that Dreyfus is guilty. I have it from an authentic source."

She blushed as she spoke, for it was Raoul to whom she had referred.

Ernest entered the drawing-room, sulky and morose.

"Good evening, mother! Good evening, M. l'Abbé!"

He took very little notice of the others, but threw himself upon the cushions of a couch which stood just beneath the portrait of his father, whom he much resembled. He was the Baron over again, but shrunken, diminished, and sickly, the wild boar grown small, pale, and flabby. The likeness, however, was striking, and M. de Terremondre drew attention to it:

"It is surprising, M. de Bonmont, how like you are to the portrait of the late Baron, your father."

Ernest lifted his head and glanced at the picture by Delaunay.

"Ah yes, the pater! Clever chap, the pater. I'm all there myself, too, but pretty well played out. How are you, M. l'Abbé? You and I are good friends, aren't we? I want to have a little talk

with you presently." Then, turning to M. de Terremondre, who was still holding the newspaper: "What do they say there? As far as we fellows are concerned, we are not allowed an opinion of any description, you bet! Only a bourgeois is permitted the luxury of an idea, though it may be an idiotic one. Then, good Lord, the things that interest the big bugs, how should they interest us?"

He sneered. His life in the regiment afforded him endless amusement. Although he did not appear so, he was exceedingly shrewd, prudent, and cunning; he also knew when to hold his tongue, and took the keenest delight in the great and demoralising power he possessed. In spite of himself, he corrupted every one that he approached, and was extremely pleased when he could swindle them in some way, as, for instance, when he succeeded in prevailing upon a poor and vain companion to present him with a meerschaum pipe. His greatest joy was to despise and hate his superiors, and to see how some of the more covetous among them would absolutely sell him their very souls, while others, more timorous and fearful of compromising themselves by showing him any leniency, would deny him, not a favour even, but the enjoyment of some right which they would never refuse to the son of a peasant.

Full of craft and cunning, young Ernest de Bonmont came and sat by the Abbé Guitrel, and began to talk coaxingly to him:

"M. l'Abbé, you often see the Brécés, don't you? You know them very well?"

"You must not imagine, my son," replied the Abbé, "that I am an intimate friend of the Duc de Brécé. That is not the case. The utmost I can say is that I often have the privilege of visiting in the family circle. On certain festival days I say Mass in the chapel of Notre-Dame-des-Belles-Feuilles, which, as you know, is situated in the woods of Brécé. This, as I was just telling your mother, is a source of consolation and thankfulness to me. After mass I lunch, either at the Presbytery, with M. le curé Traviès, or at the château, where, I am bound to say, they treat me with the greatest kindness. The Duke's manner towards me is always simple and natural, and the ladies are amiable and pleasant. They do a great deal of good around here, and would do still more were it not for the unjustified prejudices, blind hatred, and bitter feelings of the people."

"Do you happen to know what effect was produced by the utensil Mother sent to the Duchess for the chapel of Notre-Dame-des-Belles-Feuilles?"

"What utensil do you mean? Do you refer to the golden ciborium? I can assure you that M.

and Madame de Brécé were much touched by your mother's simple act of homage to the miraculous Virgin."

"So it was a good idea, wasn't it, M. l'Abbé? Well, it was my notion. Mother isn't particularly bright in the way of ideas, you know—oh, I'm not reproaching her. However, let us talk seriously. You are very fond of me, are you not, M. l'Abbé?"

M. Guitrel took young Bonmont's hands in both his.

"Never doubt my affection for you, my son; it is the love of a father for his child; I might even say that it is a maternal love as well, and thus express more fully all that it contains both of strength and tenderness. I have watched you grow up, my dear Ernest, since that day on which you made so excellent a first communion, to this moment, in which you are accomplishing your noble duty as a soldier in our great French Army, which, day by day, I am thankful to say, grows more Christian and more pious. And it is my firm conviction, my dearest boy, that amid the distractions, the errors even of your age, you have kept the faith. Your actions speak for themselves. I know you have always looked upon it as your duty to contribute towards our works of charity. You are my favourite child."

"Well, then, M. l'Abbé, do your child a good

turn. Tell the Duc de Brécé to give me permission to wear the Brécé Hunt badge."

"The Hunt badge? But, my son, what do I know of such matters? I am not, like M. de Traviès, a great hunter before the Lord. I have followed St. Thomas far more than St. Hubert. The Hunt badge? Is that not a figurative expression, a kind of metaphor to express the idea of membership of the Hunt? Anyway, my son, what you desire is an invitation to the Brécé meets."

Young Bonmont gave a jump.

"Don't, for heaven's sake, get mixed, M. l'Abbé. That's not it—oh, not a bit of it. An invitation—I'm pretty sure to get an invitation to the de Brécé meets, in exchange for the utensil."

"Ciborium, ciborium, remember the Latin *ciborium!* I also think, my dear child, that the Duke and Duchess will make a special point of sending you an invitation as soon as they realise that it will please you and your mother to accept it."

"I believe you! As soon as they stuck to the plate. But you can tell them from me that I don't care a flip for an invitation to see a meet. I don't want to stay and rot at some crossroads where there is nothing to be seen, where you are sure to get all the mud kicked up by the horses full in your face, and then be sworn at by a huntsman for obstructing

the way. No, I am not particularly keen on such amusements. The Brécés can keep their invitation!"

"In that case, my son, I do not understand your idea."

"And yet my idea is clear enough, M. l'Abbé. I do not intend the Brécés to laugh up their sleeve at me, that's what I'm driving at."

"Pray explain yourself!"

"Well, M. l'Abbé, just imagine being planted down on the Carrefour du Roi, together with the village doctor, the wife of the Chief of Police, and M. Irvoy's head clerk! No, such a situation is not to be thought of for one moment. But if I wear the Hunt badge, I can follow the hounds, and, although I may look a bit off colour sometimes, I'll soon show them whether I can ride or not. Now you can get me what I want, M. l'Abbé; the Brécés will not refuse you anything. All you have to do is to ask it in the name of Notre-Dame-des-Belles-Feuilles."

"I beg of you, my child, not to bring Notre-Dame-des-Belles-Feuilles into such a matter, which cannot interest her in the very slightest. The miraculous Virgin of Brécé has enough to do in answering the prayers of widows and orphans, not to mention those of our brave soldiers in Madagascar. But, my dear Ernest, is there really so much to be gained by the possession of this badge? Is it

then such a precious talisman? No doubt strange privileges are attached to its possession. Tell me all about them. I am far from despising the noble and ancient art of hunting, for I belong to the clergy of an eminently sporting diocese, and would be glad of any information on the subject."

"You do amuse me, M. l'Abbé, and I know you must be joking. You know as well as I do what is understood by the Hunt badge: it is the right to wear the colours of any particular hunt. I am going to speak frankly to you; I am candid, because I can afford to be so. I want to be made a member of the Brécé Hunt, because it is the correct thing, and I like to be in the swim. I want it because I am a snob and a vain man. I also want it because it would amuse me to dine with the Brécés on St. Hubert's Day. The Brécé badge would be just about my mark. I want it very badly, and I'm not going to disguise the fact. I have no false shame—no shame of any kind, for the matter of that. Listen to me, M. l'Abbé, I have something of great importance to say to you. You must understand that in broaching the subject to the Duc de Brécé, you will only be claiming what is my due; you understand—my due! I have property round here; I do not shoot the deer; I let people hunt and kill on my estates, all of which deserves both consideration and

gratitude. M. de Brécé is really under obligations to his kind little neighbour Ernest."

The Abbé said nothing. It was evident that he did not like the idea, and was prepared to refuse to do what was asked of him. Young Bonmont went on:

"I need hardly say, M. l'Abbé, that, in case the Brécés demand a price in return for the privilege, I should not stick at such a trifle."

M. l'Abbé Guitrel made a movement of protest.

"Banish that supposition, my son! It ill accords with the character of the Duc de Brécé."

"That may be, M. l'Abbé. Whether it be given or sold, depends upon the owner's ideas and the state of his banking account. Some packs cost the master 80,000 francs a year; others bring him in as much as 30,000 francs a year. In saying this I am not in any way blaming the man who expects people to pay for their privileges. Personally, I should prefer to do so, indeed, I consider it only fair. Then there are districts where hunting costs so much, that the master, even if he is a rich man, cannot keep things going alone. Just suppose for instance, M. l'Abbé, that you kept a pack in the neighbourhood of Paris. Can you see yourself meeting all expenses and finding your purse sufficient to pay the heavy claims entailed? But I think I have heard that the Brécé badge is not to be bought with

money. The Duke hasn't the gumption to make a profit out of his pack. Well, M. l'Abbé, you will get it for me, gratis and for nothing! It will all be so much to the good."

Before replying, the Abbé reflected long and deeply, and this display of prudence worried young Bonmont not a little. At last, however, the Abbé opened his lips:

"My son, I have said so once, and will say it again. I have a great affection for you, and should like both to please and to aid you. I would welcome any opportunity of doing you a service. But I really have not the necessary qualifications to solicit on your behalf the worldly distinction to which you refer. Just think for a moment. Suppose that, after hearing my request, M. de Brécé should refuse or make some difficulty about granting it? I should be powerless to bring any pressure to bear upon him. What chance would a humble professor of elocution at the Grand Séminaire have of overcoming resistance, removing difficulty, and obtaining consent, so to speak, by main force? I have nothing with which to convince and hold parley with the great ones of the earth. I cannot, must not, even in so paltry a matter as this, undertake anything without being assured of its success."

Young Bonmont looked at the Abbé with surprise mingled with admiration, and said:

"I understand, M. l'Abbé. You cannot manage it for the time being. But when you are made a bishop you will carry off the badge with the same ease as a man at a fair carries off the ring, when tilting upon the wooden horses of the roundabouts. Of course you will!"

"It is quite possible," returned M. Guitrel, with the greatest gravity, "that if a bishop were to ask for the Hunt badge for you, the Duke would not refuse him."

CHAPTER IV

HAT evening M. Bergeret, having done a hard day's work, was feeling tired. He was taking his customary stroll in the town, accompanied by M. Goubin, his favourite disciple since the treachery of M. Roux, and as he ruminated over the work he had accomplished he fell to wondering, like so many others before him, what profit a man hath of all his labours. M. Goubin asked:

"Master, do you think that Paul Louis Courrier would be a good subject to choose for an essay?"

M. Bergeret made no reply. He was just then passing the shop of Madame Fusellier, the stationer, and, stopping in front of the window in which sundry drawing models were displayed, he looked with interest at the Farnese Hercules who was showing off his muscles amid these examples of scholastic art.

"I feel kindly disposed towards him," remarked M. Bergeret.

"Towards whom?" asked M. Goubin, wiping his glasses.

"Hercules," replied M. Bergeret. "He was a

good man. He himself said: 'My life is laborious and tends to a high ideal.' He toiled much upon this earth ere he received the reward of death, which, in truth, is the only guerdon of life. He had no time to give to meditation, and prolonged thought never marred the simplicity of his soul. But when evening came a feeling of melancholy would steal over him, and, in default of an enquiring mind, his great heart would reveal to him the vanity of effort, and the necessity which compels all men, even the best, to do evil even when they do good. This man of might was extraordinarily gentle. Like the rest of us when we commit ourselves to action, he found that he destroyed indiscriminately both the innocent and the guilty, the meek and the violent, and, when he mused over all this, it doubtless caused him more than one regret. Perhaps he even felt compassion for the unhappy monsters he had destroyed for the benefit of mankind: the poor Cretan bull, the poor Lernæan hydra, or the beautiful lion who, when he died, provided him with such an excellently warm cloak. More than once, when the day was over and his work done, his club must have weighed heavily upon him." M. Bergeret raised aloft his umbrella with an effort as though it had been a heavy weapon. Then he continued his discourse. "He was strong, yet weak. We love him because he is like ourselves."

"Hercules?" asked M. Goubin.

"Yes," replied M. Bergeret. "Like ourselves, he was born unhappy, the child of a god and a woman. From this mixed origin he derived the sadness of a thoughtful spirit and the cravings of a ravening body. All his life long he was subject to the caprices of a whimsical king. Are not we too the children of Zeus and the hapless Alcmena, and the slaves of Eurystheus? I am at the mercy of the Minister of Public Instruction, who may take it into his head at any moment to ship me off to Algiers, just as Hercules was sent to the land of the Nasamones."

"You are not leaving us, dear Master?" asked M. Goubin anxiously.

"See how sad he is!" went on M. Bergeret. "How wearily he leans upon his club, letting his arm hang limply at his side! His head is bowed, he is thinking of his heavy labours. The Farnese Hercules was certainly conceived after the statue by Lysippus, who was a blacksmith's apprentice before becoming a sculptor, and it is undoubtedly that sturdy sculptor of a sturdy hero who fixed the type of Hercules."

Having wiped his glasses once again with his handkerchief, M. Goubin tried to catch a glimpse of the principal points mentioned by the master, and while he was thus engaged Madame Fusellier, the

proprietress of the shop, on hearing the clock strike nine, extinguished the gas under the disciple's peering eyes. The poor man had no idea why he could see nothing, for he was so short-sighted as to be an utter stranger to that imaginary world in which most men have their being.

And, as M. Bergeret continued to walk and talk, he followed the sound of his voice, for he trusted only to what he heard others say to guide him along those pathways of the earth whereon his youthful prudence told him he might venture.

"His strength," continued the Professor, "was the cause of his weakness. He was under the yoke of his own strength, subject to the exigencies of his nature, which compelled him to devour whole sheep, drink great jars of dark wine, and to do foolish deeds for women of little worth. The hero whose club brought peace and happiness and justice to the world, the son of the great god Zeus, would seek sleep anywhere like a mere tramp, or tarry for weeks and weeks with a wench whose lover he was. And this was the cause of his melancholy. With his simple soul, his submissiveness, his love of justice, and his mighty muscles, it was to be feared that he could be nothing more than an excellent soldier or a glorified gendarme. But his very weaknesses, his errors, his unhappy experiences broadened his soul, opened out his vision upon the manifold diversity

of life and mellowed with gentleness his terrible capacity for good works."

"Dear Master," said M. Goubin, "do you not think that Hercules is the sun, that his twelve labours are the signs of the zodiac, and that Dejanira's fiery robe represents the flaming clouds of the setting sun?"

"That is possible," replied M. Bergeret, "but I do not wish to believe it. It pleases me to have the same idea of Hercules that a barber of Thebes or a herb-vendor of Eleusis would have had in the time of the Median wars. I think this idea from the point of view of force, fulness and vivacity is worth all your systems of comparative mythology put together. Hercules was a kind-hearted man. When he went to seek the steeds of Diomedes he crossed through Pheræ and stayed his steps before the palace of Admetus. He called for food and drink, and spoke very roughly to the servants, who had never set eyes on such an uncouth guest. He crowned himself with myrtles, and drank enormous quantities of wine, and, being very drunk, and not at all proud, he tried to force the cup-bearer to drink with him; but the latter, very shocked at such manners, replied severely that it was no time for eating and drinking, when the good Queen Alcestis had just been borne to the grave. She had consecrated herself to Thanatos in place of her husband

Admetus. It was, therefore, not an ordinary death, but a kind of spell which had been cast over her.

"Good Hercules immediately recovered from his drunkenness, and asked whither they had taken Alcestis. Beyond the suburb on the way to Larissa she lay in a tomb of polished marble. Thither hastened Hercules, and when Thanatos, robed in black, came to taste of the offering of cakes dipped in blood, the hero, who was lying in ambush behind the funeral pile, threw himself upon the King of Darkness, held him prisoner in the circle of his arms, and forced him, all bruised and broken, to give up Alcestis, who, veiled and silent, returned with him to the palace of Admetus. This time he would accept no refreshment, he was in haste, for he had barely time to fetch the steeds of Diomedes.

"That was a wonderful adventure, but I think I prefer the tale about the Cercopes. Do you know the story of the two brothers, M. Goubin? One was called Andolous and the other Atlantos, and they had faces like monkeys. Their name leads me to believe that they were also possessed of tails like the smaller species of the monkey tribe. They were very cunning thieves, and robbed the orchards, and their mother was continually warning them to beware of the hero, Melampyges. This, you know, was the name familiarly given to Hercules, whose skin was not white. The two rash little creatures

disdained their mother's wise counsels, and one day, having surprised the 'Melampyges' asleep on the mossy banks of a stream, they crept up to him to try and steal his club and lionskin. But the hero, waking suddenly, seized them, tied them by the feet to the branch of a tree, and slinging them over his shoulder went upon his way. The Cercopes were doubtless very uncomfortable, both in mind and body, but as the latter was extremely supple and the former happy-go-lucky, they were amused and interested in everything they could see, and what they chiefly saw was the reason for the hero's nickname of mélampyge. Atlantos pointed this out to his brother Andolous, who replied that their captor was indeed the hero of whom their mother had spoken. And as they hung like squirrels from a hunter's spear they whispered, 'Melampyges! Melampyges!' with a mocking laugh like the cry of the forest lapwing.

Hercules was a very irritable man, and did not like being made fun of, but he was not over proud, and never imagined that the whole of his body was as white as that of poor little Hylas. The name that had been bestowed upon him appeared to him an honourable one, and quite worthy of a strong man who journeyed about accomplishing great labours. He was a simple soul and easily moved to laughter. The remarks of the two Cercopes

struck him as so funny that he stopped short, and, placing his game upon the ground, sat down by the wayside and began to shout with laughter. For a long time he remained there filling the valley with the sounds of his mirth. The setting sun spread his crimson rays over the clouds and gleamed on the mountain tops, and still the hero's laughter rang out from beneath the dark pines and tufted larches. At last, however, he rose, untied the two little monkey-men, and, having admonished them, let them go, while in the falling darkness he continued his rough journey across the mountains. You see he was a kind-hearted man!"

"Dear Master," said M. Goubin, "allow me to ask you a question. Do you consider Paul Louis Courrier a good subject for my essay? Because as soon as I have got my degree——"

CHAPTER V

AS they were discussing the Affair at Paillot's library, in a corner devoted to old books, M. Bergeret, who was of a speculative turn of mind, gave expression to ideas upon the subject that were not in accord with popular sentiment.

"This hearing of cases in camera is a detestable practice," he said.

And as M. de Terremondre offered in defence reasons of State, he replied:

"We have no State. We have administrations. What we call reasons of State are simply the reasons of government departments. We are told that such reasons are sacred; as a matter of fact, they afford the department the opportunity to hide its errors, and at the same time to aggravate their consequences."

"I am a republican, a Jacobin, a terrorist—and a patriot," remarked M. Mazure solemnly. "I am quite willing to send the generals to the guillotine, but I allow no one to dispute the decisions of military justice."

"And you are right," replied M. de Terremondre,

"for if any justice is worthy of respect, it is that above all others. And, knowing the army as I do, I can assure you that there are no judges so indulgent or so merciful as military judges."

"I am very glad to hear you say so," replied M. Bergeret. "But as the army is a department just the same as agriculture, finance or public instruction, one cannot conceive of there being such a thing as military courts, when there are neither agricultural, financial, nor university courts. Any peculiar form of justice is directly opposed to the fundamental principles of modern law. The military provostships will appear as old-fashioned and barbarous to our descendants as seigniorial and ecclesiastical courts appear to us to-day."

"You are joking!" said M. de Terremondre.

"That is what has been said of every prophet," replied M. Bergeret.

"But if you attack the courts martial," cried M. de Terremondre, "it means the end of the Army, and therefore the end of the country."

M. Bergeret's reply was as follows:

"When the priests and seigniors were deprived of the right of hanging their serfs, people thought it meant the end of all law and order. Soon, however, a new order of government sprang up, better than the old one. What I say is this: in times of peace let the soldier be judged by a civil court. Do

you imagine that since the time of Charles VII, or even since Napoleon, the Army has not survived more drastic innovations than that?"

"I am an old Jacobin," repeated M. Mazure. "I am in favour of courts martial, and would have the heads of the Army subject to the authority of a committee of public safety. There is nothing more calculated to keep them up to the mark."

"That's another matter altogether," said M. de Terremondre. "I return to our original subject and ask M. Bergeret whether he honestly believes it possible that *seven* officers could make a mistake?"

"Fourteen!" cried M. Mazure.

"Fourteen," repeated M. de Terremondre.

"I do believe it possible," said M. Bergeret.

"Fourteen French officers!" ejaculated M. de Terremondre.

"Oh, well," said M. Bergeret, "they might have been Swiss, Belgian, Spanish, German, or Dutch, and have made just as bad a blunder."

"Impossible!" cried M. de Terremondre.

The librarian Paillot shook his head, thereby meaning to express the fact that he also considered it impossible. And his clerk, Léon, looked at M. Bergeret with indignant surprise.

"I do not know whether you will ever be enlightened," went on M. Bergeret sweetly. "I do

not think so, although all things are possible, even the triumph of truth."

"You mean the Revision," said M. de Terremondre. "That, never! You will never succeed in getting the Revision; I have been told as much by three Ministers and twenty deputies."

"The poet Bouchor," replied M. Bergeret, "teaches us that it is better to endure the horrors of war than to commit an unjust action. But such an alternative does not confront you, gentlemen, and you are being scared with lies."

Just as M. Bergeret was saying this a great noise was heard in the square outside. A band of little boys was marching past and shouting, *"A bas Zola! Mort aux juifs!"* They were on their way to break the windows of Meyer, the bootmaker, who was supposed to be a Jew, and the townsmen indulgently watched them go by.

"Fine little chaps!" cried M. de Terremondre, when the demonstrators had filed by.

M. Bergeret, with his nose buried in a ponderous volume, slowly remarked:

"The cause of liberty had only the very smallest minority of educated people upon her side. The clergy almost to a man, the generals and the ignorant and fanatical mob clamoured for a master."

"What is that you are saying?" asked M. Mazure excitedly.

"Nothing," replied M. Bergeret. "I am reading a chapter of Spanish history which describes the manners and customs of the people at the time of the restoration of Ferdinand VII."

The bootmaker, Meyer, was half killed, nevertheless. He did not complain, for fear of being killed outright, and also because the justice of the people, together with that of the Army, filled him with mute admiration.

CHAPTER VI

BERGERET was not unhappy, for he rejoiced in that true independence which comes from within, and his soul was unfettered. Since the departure of his wife he was also enjoying the sweets of solitude, while awaiting the arrival of his daughter Pauline, who was shortly expected from Arcachon with his sister, Mademoiselle Bergeret.

He looked forward to a happy life with his daughter, who resembled him in certain turns of mind and speech, so that it flattered his vanity when people praised her.

He was pleased at the idea of seeing his sister Zoe, an old maid, who, having never had any pretensions to good looks, had not lost her natural frankness of disposition, to which was added a secret delight in making herself unpleasant, but who lacked neither wit nor kindliness.

For the time being, however, M. Bergeret was busy settling down in his new quarters. He hung his views of Naples and Vesuvius, legacies both, on the walls of his study. Now of all the delights per-

mitted to a respectable man, there is perhaps none which procures him such tranquil enjoyment as that of knocking nails into a wall. The keenest pleasure of that experienced voluptuary, Comte de Caylus, was unpacking cases of Etruscan pottery. Thus M. Bergeret proceeded to hang up on his wall an old water-colour representing Vesuvius, adorned with an aigrette of flame and smoke, standing out against the dark blue sky of midnight. This picture reminded him of the days of his wondering and enchanted childhood.

He was not sad, neither was he glad. He had money worries, he knew the unloveliness of poverty. "Money makes the man," as Pindar says (*Isth.* II).

He did not get on with his colleagues or his pupils. He did not get on with the townspeople; incapable as he was of comprehending either their thoughts or their feelings, he had been obliged to withdraw from human fellowship, and his peculiar way of thinking had deprived him of the enjoyment of that genial feeling of comradeship which even high walls and closed doors cannot exclude.

The mere fact that he was a thinker made him a strange and disturbing element suspected by all. He was even a source of worry to Paillot, the bookseller, and his asylum and refuge, the corner where the old books were kept, was no longer to be counted on. In spite of all this he was not unhappy. He

set about arranging his books on the deal shelves put up by the carpenter, and took pleasure in handling these little memorials of his humble contemplative life. He worked with zeal at his task of getting things straight, and when he tired of hanging pictures or arranging furniture, he buried himself deep in some book, with a lurking feeling, however, that he ought not to enjoy it because it was a human product, yet enjoying it notwithstanding. He read a few pages on "the progress realised by modern society," and his reflections ran as follows:

"Let us be humble and believe ourselves in no way excellent, for we are not excellent. As we examine ourselves, let us uncover our true countenance, which is rough and violent like that of our forefathers, and, as we have the advantage over them of a longer tradition, let us at least recognise the sequence and continuity of our ignorance."

Thus pondered M. Bergeret, as he settled himself in his new abode. He was not sad, neither was he glad, as he reflected that he would always yearn in vain for Madame de Gromance, not realising the fact that she was only precious to him by virtue of the craving which she inspired. But the very derangement of his feelings prevented him from clearly grasping this philosophical truth. He was not handsome, he was not young, he was not rich; he was not sad, because his wisdom approached the

happy state of ataraxy, without, however, finally attaining it, and he was not glad, because he was somewhat of a sensualist, and his soul was not free from illusions and desires.

The servant Marie, who had fulfilled her task of bringing terror and misery into the house, had been dismissed, and in her place he had engaged a decent woman from the town, whom he called Angélique, but who was spoken of as Madame Borniche by the shopkeepers and the country-people in the market-place.

Her husband, Nicolas Borniche, a good coachman, but a bad man, had deserted her when she was still young and ugly. She had been in service with various families. Her status as a married woman still filled her with a certain pride not always concealed, and with a great fondness for managing. Finally, she was by way of being a herbalist and a healer, something of a sorceress, and filled the house with a pleasant odour of herbs. Full of genuine zeal, she was obsessed by an eternal longing for affection and approval. From the very first she had taken to M. Bergeret, on account of the distinction of his mind and the gentleness of his manner, but she awaited the arrival of Mademoiselle Bergeret with foreboding, for a secret presentiment told her that she would not get on well with the sister from Arcachon. On the other hand, she pleased M.

Bergeret, who was at last enjoying peace in his house and deliverance from all his troubles.

His books, which heretofore had been despised and thrown about, were now displayed upon long shelves in the big sunny room. There he could work in quiet at his *Virgilius nauticus*, and indulge freely in silent orgies of meditation. Before the window a young plane tree gently waved its pointed leaves, and, farther away, a dark buttress of Saint-Exupère reared its jagged pinnacle, in which grew a cherry tree, doubtless planted there by a bird.

Seated at his table one morning in front of the window, against which the leaves of the plane tree quivered, M. Bergeret, who was trying to discover how the ships of Æneas had been changed into nymphs, heard a tap at the door, and forthwith his servant entered, carrying in front of her, opossum-like, a tiny creature whose black head peeped out from the folds of her apron, which she had turned up to form a pocket. With a look of anxiety and hope upon her face, she remained motionless for a moment, then she placed the little thing upon the carpet at her master's feet.

"What's that?" asked M. Bergeret.

It was a little dog of doubtful breed, having something of the terrier in him, and a well-set head, a short, smooth coat of a dark tan colour, and a tiny

little stump of a tail. His body retained its puppy-like softness and he went sniffing at the carpet.

"Angélique," said M. Bergeret, "take this animal back to its owner."

"It has no owner, Monsieur."

M. Bergeret looked silently at the little creature who had come to examine his slippers, and was giving little sniffs of approval. M. Bergeret was a philologist, which perhaps explains why at this juncture he asked a vain question.

"What is he called?"

"Monsieur," replied Angélique, "he has no name."

M. Bergeret seemed put out at this answer: he looked at the dog sadly, with a disheartened air.

Then the little animal placed its two front paws on M. Bergeret's slipper, and, holding it thus, began innocently to nibble at it. With a sudden access of compassion M. Bergeret took the tiny nameless creature upon his knee. The dog looked at him intently, and M. Bergeret was pleased at his confiding expression.

"What beautiful eyes!" he cried.

The dog's eyes were indeed beautiful, the pupils of a golden-flecked chestnut set in warm white. And his gaze spoke of simple, mysterious thoughts, common alike to the thoughtful beasts and simple men of the earth.

Tired, perhaps, with the intellectual effort he had made for the purpose of entering into communication with a human being, he closed his beautiful eyes, and, yawning widely, revealed his pink mouth, his curled-up tongue, and his array of dazzling teeth.

M. Bergeret put his hand into the dog's mouth, and allowed him to lick it, at which old Angélique gave a smile of relief.

"A more affectionate little creature doesn't breathe," she said.

"The dog," said M. Bergeret, "is a religious animal. In his savage state he worships the moon and the lights that float upon the waters. These are his gods, to whom he appeals at night with long-drawn howls. In the domesticated state he seeks by his caresses to conciliate those powerful genii who dispense the good things of this world—to wit, men. He worships and honours men by the accomplishment of the rites passed down to him by his ancestors; he licks their hand, jumps against their legs, and when they show signs of anger towards him he approaches them crawling on his belly as a sign of humility, to appease their wrath."

"All dogs are not the friends of man," remarked Angélique. "Some of them bite the hand that feeds them."

"Those are the ungodly, blasphemous dogs," returned M. Bergeret, "insensate creatures like Ajax,

the son of Telamon, who wounded the hand of the golden Aphrodite. These sacrilegious creatures die a dreadful death or lead wandering and miserable lives. They are not to be confounded with those dogs who, espousing the quarrel of their own particular god, wage war upon his enemy, the neighbouring god. They are heroes. Such, for example, is the dog of Lafolie, the butcher, who fixed his sharp teeth into the leg of the tramp Pied-d'Alouette. For it is a fact that dogs fight among themselves like men, and Turk, with his snub nose, serves his god Lafolie against the robber gods, in the same way that Israel helped Jehovah to destroy Chamos and Moloch."

The puppy, however, having decided that M. Bergeret's remarks were the reverse of interesting, curled up his feet and stretched out his head, ready to go to sleep upon the knees that harboured him.

"Where did you find him?" asked M. Bergeret.

"Well, Monsieur, it was M. Dellion's *chef* gave him to me."

"With the result," continued M. Bergeret, "that we now have this soul to care for."

"What soul?" asked Angélique.

"This canine soul. An animal is, properly speaking, a soul; I do not say an immortal soul. And yet, when I come to consider the positions this poor little beast and I myself occupy in the scheme of

things, I recognise in both exactly the same right to immortality."

After considerable hesitation, old Angélique, with a painful effort that made her upper lip curl up and reveal her two remaining teeth, said:

"If Monsieur does not want a dog, I will return him to M. Dellion's *chef;* but you may safely keep him, I assure you. You won't see or hear him."

She had hardly finished her sentence when the puppy, hearing a heavy van rolling down the street, sat bolt upright on M. Bergeret's knees, and began to bark both loud and long, so that the window-panes resounded with the noise.

M. Bergeret smiled.

"He's a watch-dog," said Angélique, by way of excuse. "They are by far the most faithful."

"Have you given him anything to eat?" asked M. Bergeret."

"Of course," returned Angélique.

"What does he eat?"

"Monsieur must be aware that dogs eat bread and meat."

Somewhat piqued, M. Bergeret retorted that in her eagerness she might very likely have taken him away from his mother before he was old enough to leave her, upon which he was lifted up again and re-examined, only to make sure of the fact that he was at least six months old.

M. Bergeret put him down on the carpet, and regarded him with interest.

"Isn't he pretty?" said the servant.

"No, he is not pretty," replied M. Bergeret. "But he is engaging, and has beautiful eyes. That is what people used to say about me," added the professor, "when I was three times as old, and not half as intelligent. Since then I have no doubt acquired an outlook upon the universe which he will never attain. But, in comparison with the Absolute, I may say that my knowledge equals his in the smallness of its extent. Like his, it is a geometrical point in the infinite." Then, addressing the little creature who was sniffing the waste-paper basket, he went on: "Smell it out, sniff it well, take from the outside world all the knowledge that can reach your simple brain through the medium of that black truffle-like nose of yours. And what though I at the same time observe, and compare, and study? We shall never know, neither the one nor the other of us, why we have been put into this world, and what we are doing in it. What are we here for, eh?"

As he had spoken rather loudly, the puppy looked at him anxiously, and M. Bergeret, returning to the thought which had first filled his mind, said to the servant:

"We must give him a name."

With her hands folded in front of her she replied laughingly that that would not be a difficult matter.

Upon which M. Bergeret made the private reflection that to the simple all things are simple, but that clear-sighted souls, who look upon things from many and divers aspects, invisible to the vulgar mind, experience the greatest difficulty in coming to a decision about even the most trivial matters. And he cudgelled his brains, trying to hit upon a name for the little living thing who was busily engaged in nibbling the fringe of the carpet.

"All the names of dogs," thought he, "preserved in the ancient treatises of the huntsmen of old, such as Fouilloux, and in the verses of our sylvan poets such as La Fontaine—Finaud, Miraut, Briffaut, Ravaud, and such-like names, are given to sporting dogs, who are the aristocracy of the kennel, the chivalry of the canine race. The dog of Ulysses was called Argos, and he was a hunter too, so Homer tells us. 'In his youth he hunted the little hares of Ithaca, but now he was old and hunted no more.' What we require is something quite different. The names given by old maids to their lap-dogs would be more suitable were they not usually pretentious and absurd. Azor, for instance, is ridiculous!"

So M. Bergeret ruminated, calling to memory many a dog name, without being able to decide,

however, on one that pleased him. He would have liked to invent a name, but lacked the imagination.

"What day is it?" he asked at last.

"The ninth," replied Angélique, "Thursday, the ninth."

"Well, then!" said M. Bergeret, "can't we call the dog Thursday, like Robinson Crusoe who called his man Friday, for the same reason?"

"As Monsieur pleases," said Angélique. "But it isn't very pretty."

"Very well," said M. Bergeret, "find a name for the creature yourself, for, after all, you brought him here."

"Oh, no," said the servant. "I couldn't find a name for him, I'm not clever enough. When I saw him lying on the straw in the kitchen, I called him Riquet, and he came up and played about under my skirts."

"You called him Riquet, did you?" cried M. Bergeret. "Why didn't you say so before? Riquet he is and Riquet he shall remain, that's settled. Now be off with you, and take Riquet with you. I want to work."

"Monsieur," returned Angélique, "I am going to leave the puppy with you; I will come for him when I get back from market."

"You could quite well take him to market with you," retorted M. Bergeret.

"Monsieur, I am going to church as well."

It was quite true that she really was going to church at Saint-Exupère, to ask for a Mass to be said for the repose of her husband's soul. She did that regularly once a year, not that she had ever been informed of the decease of Borniche, who had never communicated with her since his desertion, but it was a settled thing in the good woman's mind that Borniche was dead. She had therefore no fear of his coming to rob her of the little she had, and did her best to fix things up to his advantage in the other world, so long as he left her in peace in this one.

"Eh!" ejaculated M. Bergeret. "Shut him up in the kitchen or some other convenient place, and do not wor——"

He did not finish his sentence, for Angélique had vanished, purposely pretending not to hear, that she might leave Riquet with his master. She wanted them to grow used to one another, and she also wanted to give poor, friendless M. Bergeret a companion. Having closed the door behind her, she went along the corridor and down the steps.

M. Bergeret set to work again and plunged head foremost into his *Virgilius nauticus*. He loved the work; it rested his thoughts, and became a kind of game that suited him, for he played it all by himself. On the table beside him were several boxes

filled with pegs, which he fixed into little squares of cardboard to represent the fleet of Æneas. Now while he was thus occupied he felt something like tiny fists tapping at his legs. Riquet, whom he had quite forgotten, was standing on his hind legs patting his master's knees, and wagging his little stump of a tail. When he tired of this, he let his paws slide down the trouser leg, then got up and began his coaxing over again. And M. Bergeret, turning away from the printed lore before him, saw two brown eyes gazing up at him lovingly.

"What gives a human beauty to the gaze of this dog," he thought, "is probably that it varies unceasingly, being by turns bright and vivacious or serious and sorrowful; because through these eyes his little dumb soul finds expression for thought that lacks nothing in depth nor sequence. My father was very fond of cats, and, consequently, I liked them too. He used to declare that cats are the wise man's best companions, for they respect his studious hours. Bajazet, his Persian cat, would sit at night for hours at a stretch, motionless and majestic, perched on a corner of his table. I still remember the agate eyes of Bajazet, but those jewel-like orbs concealed all thought, that owl-like stare was cold, and hard, and wicked. How much do I prefer the melting gaze of the dog!"

Riquet, however, was agitating his paws in frantic

fashion, and M. Bergeret, who was anxious to return to his philological amusements, said kindly, but shortly:

"Lie down, Riquet!"

Upon which Riquet went and thrust his nose against the door through which Angélique had passed out. And there he remained, uttering from time to time plaintive, meek little cries. After a while he began to scratch, making a gentle rasping noise on the polished floor with his nails. Then the whining began again followed by more scratching. Disturbed by these sounds, M. Bergeret sternly bade him keep still.

Riquet peered at him sorrowfully with his brown eyes, then, sitting down, he looked at M. Bergeret again, rose, returned to the door, sniffed underneath it, and wailed afresh.

"Do you want to go out?" asked M. Bergeret.

Putting down his pen, he went to the door, which he held a few inches open. After making sure that he was running no risk of hurting himself on the way out, Riquet slipped through the doorway and marched off with a composure that was scarcely polite. On returning to his table, M. Bergeret, sensitive man that he was, pondered over the dog's action. He said to himself:

"I was on the point of reproaching the animal for going without saying either good-bye or thank

you, and expecting him to apologise for leaving me. It was the beautiful human expression of his eyes that made me so foolish. I was beginning to look upon him as one of my own kind."

After making this reflection M. Bergeret applied himself anew to the metamorphosis of the ships of Æneas, a legend both pretty and popular, but perhaps a trifle too simple in itself for expression in such noble language. M. Bergeret, however, saw nothing incongruous in it. He knew that the nursery tales have furnished material for nearly all epics, and that Virgil had carefully collected together in his poem the riddles, the puns, the uncouth stories, and the puerile imaginings of his forefathers; that Homer, his master and the master of all the bards, had done little more than tell over again what the good wives of Ionia and the fishermen of the islands had been narrating for more than a thousand years before him. Besides, for the time being this was the least of his worries; he had another far more important preoccupation. An expression, met with in the course of the charming story of the metamorphosis, did not appear sufficiently plain to him. That was what was worrying him.

"Bergeret, my friend," he said to himself, "this is where you must open your eyes and show your sense. Remember that Virgil always expresses himself with extreme precision when writing on the

technique of the arts; remember that he went yachting at Baïae, that he was an expert in naval construction, and that therefore his language, in this passage, must have a precise and definite signification."

And M. Bergeret carefully consulted a great number of texts, in order to throw a light upon the word which he could not understand, and which he had to explain. He was almost on the point of grasping the solution, or, at any rate, he had caught a glimpse of it, when he heard a noise like the rattling of chains at his door, a noise which, although not alarming, struck him as curious. The disturbance was presently accompanied by a shrill whining, and M. Bergeret, interrupted in his philological investigations, immediately concluded that these importunate wails must emanate from Riquet.

As a matter of fact, after having looked vainly all over the house for Angélique, Riquet had been seized with a desire to see M. Bergeret again. Solitude was as painful to him as human society was dear. In order to put an end to the noise, and also because he had a secret desire to see Riquet again, M. Bergeret got up from his arm-chair and opened the door, and Riquet re-entered the study with the same coolness with which he had quitted it, but as soon as he saw the door close behind him he assumed

a melancholy expression, and began to wander up and down the room like a soul in torment.

He had a sudden way of appearing to find something of interest beneath the chairs and tables, and would sniff long and noisily; then he would walk aimlessly about or sit down in a corner with an air of great humility, like the beggars who are to be seen in church porches. Finally he began to bark at a cast of Hermes which stood upon the mantelshelf, whereupon M. Bergeret addressed him in words full of just reproach.

"Riquet! such vain agitation, such sniffing and barking were better suited to a stable than to the study of a professor, and they lead one to suppose that your ancestors lived with horses whose straw litters they shared. I do not reproach you with that. It is only natural you should have inherited their habits, manners, and tendencies as well as their close-cropped coat, their sausage-like body, and their long, thin nose. I do not speak of your beautiful eyes, for there are few men, few dogs even, who can open such beauties to the light of day. But, leaving all that aside, you are a mongrel, my friend, a mongrel from your short, bandy legs to your head. Again I am far from despising you for that. What I want you to understand is that if you desire to live with me, you will have to drop your mongrel manners and behave like a *scolar,* in other words,

to remain silent and quiet, to respect work, after the manner of Bajazet, who of a night would sit for four hours without stirring, and watch my father's pen skimming over the paper. He was a silent and tactful creature. How different is your own character, my friend! Since you came into this chamber of study your hoarse voice, your unseemly snufflings and your whines, that sound like steam whistles, have constantly confused my thoughts and interrupted my reflections. And now you have made me lose the drift of an important passage in Servius, referring to the construction of one of the ships of Æneas. Know then, Riquet, my friend, that this is the house of silence and the abode of meditation, and that if you are anxious to stay here you must become literary. Be quiet!"

Thus spoke M. Bergeret. Riquet, who had listened to him with mute astonishment, approached his master, and with suppliant gesture placed a timid paw upon the knee, which he seemed to revere in a fashion that savoured of long ago. Then a kind thought struck M. Bergeret. He picked him up by the scruff of his neck, and put him upon the cushions of the ample easy chair in which he was sitting. Turning himself round three times, Riquet lay down, and then remained perfectly still and silent. He was quite happy. M. Bergeret was grateful to him, and as he ran through Servius he

occasionally stroked the close-cropped coat, which, without being soft, was smooth and very pleasant to the touch. Riquet fell into a gentle doze, and communicated to his master the generous warmth of his body, the subtle, gentle heat of a living, breathing thing. And from that moment M. Bergeret found more pleasure in his *Virgilius nauticus*.

From floor to ceiling his study was lined with deal shelves, bearing books arranged in methodical order. One glance, and all that remains to us of Latin thought was ready to his hand. The Greeks lay half-way up. In a quiet corner, easy of access, were Rabelais, the excellent story-tellers of the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles,* Bonaventure des Périers, Guillaume Bouchet, and all the old French "conteurs" whom M. Bergeret considered better adapted to humanity than writings in the more heroic style, and who were the favourite reading of his leisure. He only possessed them in cheap modern editions, but he had discovered a poor bookbinder in the town who covered his volumes with leaves from a book of anthems, and it gave M. Bergeret the keenest pleasure to see these free-spoken gentlemen thus clad in Requiems and Misereres. This was the sole luxury and the only peculiarity of his austere library. The other books were paper-backed or bound in poor and worn-out bindings. The gentle friendly manner in which they were handled by their owner gave

them the look of tools set out in a busy man's workshop. The books of archæology and art found a resting-place on the highest shelves, not by any means out of contempt, but because they were not so often used.

Now while M. Bergeret worked at his *Virgilius nauticus* and shared his chair with Riquet, he found, as chance would have it, that it was necessary to consult Ottfried Müller's little *Manual,* which happened to be on one of the topmost shelves.

There was no need of one of those tall ladders on wheels topped by railings and a shelf, to enable him to reach the book; there were ladders of this description in the town library, and they had been used by all the great book-lovers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; indeed, several of the latter had fallen from them, and thus died honourable deaths, in the manner spoken of in the pamphlet entitled: *Des bibliophiles qui moururent en tombant de leur échelle.*

No, indeed! M. Bergeret had no need of anything of the sort. A small pair of folding steps would have served his purpose excellently well, and he had once seen some in the shop of Clérambaut, the cabinet-maker, in the Rue de Josde. They folded up, and looked just the thing with their bevelled uprights each pierced with a trefoil as a grip for the hand. M. Bergeret would have given

anything to possess them, but the state of his finances, which were somewhat involved, forced him to abandon the idea. No one knew better than he did that financial ills are not mortal, but, for all that, he had no steps in his study.

In place of such a pair of steps he used an old cane-bottomed chair, the back of which had been broken, leaving only two horns or antennæ, which had shewn themselves to be more dangerous than useful. So they had been cut to the level of the seat, and the chair had become a stool. There were two reasons why this stool was ill-fitted to the use to which M. Bergeret was wont to put it. In the first place the woven-cane seat had grown slack with long use, and now contained a large hollow, making one's foothold precarious. In the second place the stool was too low, and it was hardly possible when standing upon it to reach the books on the highest shelf, even with the finger-tips. What generally happened was that in the endeavour to grasp one book several others fell out, and it depended upon their being bound or paper-covered whether they lay with broken corners or sprawled with leaves spread like a fan or a concertina.

Now with the intention of getting down the *Manual* of Ottfried Müller, M. Bergeret quitted the chair he was sharing with Riquet, who, rolled into a ball with his head tight pressed to his body,

lay in warm comfort, opening one voluptuous eye, which he reclosed as quickly. Then M. Bergeret drew the stool from the dark corner where it was hidden and placed it where it was required, hoisted himself upon it, and managed by making his arm as long as possible, and straining upon tiptoe to touch, first with one then with two fingers, the back of a book which he judged to be the one he was needing. As for the thumb it remained below the shelf and rendered no assistance whatever. M. Bergeret, who found it therefore exceedingly difficult to draw out the book, made the reflection that the reason why the hand is a precious implement is on account of the position of the thumb, and that no being could rise to be an artist who had four feet and no hands.

"It is to the hand," he reflected, "that men owe their power of becoming engineers, painters, writers, and manipulators of all kinds of things. If they had not a thumb as well as their other fingers, they would be as incapable as I am at this moment, and they could never have changed the face of the earth as they have done. Beyond a doubt it is the shape of the hand that has assured to man the conquest of the world."

Then, almost simultaneously, M. Bergeret remembered that monkeys, who possess four hands, have not, for all that, created the arts, nor disposed

the earth to their use, and he erased from his mind the theory upon which he had just embarked. However, he did the best he could with his four fingers. It must be known that Ottfried Müller's *Manual* is composed of three volumes and an atlas. M. Bergeret wanted Volume I. He pulled out first the second volume, then the atlas, then volume three, and finally the book that he required. At last he held it in his hands. All that now remained for him to do was to descend, and this he was about to do when the cane seat gave way beneath his foot, which passed through it. He lost his balance and fell to the ground, not as heavily as might have been feared, for he broke his fall by grasping at one of the uprights of the bookshelf.

He was on the ground, however, full of astonishment, and wearing on one leg the broken chair; his whole body was permeated and as though constricted by a pain that spread all over it, and that presently settled itself more particularly in the region of the left elbow and hip upon which he had fallen. But, as his anatomy was not seriously damaged, he gathered his wits together; he had got so far as to realise that he must draw his right leg out of the stool in which it had so unfortunately become entangled, and that he must be careful to raise himself up on his right side, which was unhurt. He was even trying to put this into execution when

he felt a warm breath upon his cheek, and, turning his eyes, which fright and pain had for the moment fixed, he saw close to his cheek Riquet's little face.

At the sound of the fall Riquet had jumped down from the chair and run to his unfortunate master; he was now standing near him in a state of great excitement; then he commenced to run round him. First he came near out of sympathy, then he retreated out of fear of some mysterious danger. He understood perfectly well that a misfortune had taken place, but he was neither thoughtful nor clever enough to discover what it was; hence his anxiety. His fidelity drew him to his suffering friend, and his prudence stopped him on the very brink of the fatal spot. Encouraged at length by the calm and silence which eventually reigned, he licked M. Bergeret's neck and looked at him with eyes of fear and of love. The fallen master smiled, and the dog licked the end of his nose. It was a great comfort to M. Bergeret, who freed his right leg, stood erect, and limped good-humouredly back to his chair.

Riquet was there before him. All that could be seen of his eyes was a gleam between the narrow slit of the half-closed lids. He seemed to have forgotten all about the adventure that a moment before had so stirred them both. The little creature lived in the present, with no thought of time that had

run its course; not that he was wanting in memory, inasmuch as he could remember, not his own past alone, but the far-away past of his ancestors, and his little head was a rich storehouse of useful knowledge; but he took no pleasure in remembrance, and memory was not for him, as it was for M. Bergeret, a divine muse.

Gently stroking the short, smooth coat of his companion, M. Bergeret addressed him in the following affectionate terms:

"Dog! at the price of the repose which is dear to your heart, you came to me when I was dismayed and brought low. You did not laugh, as any young person of my own species would have done. It is true that however joyous or terrible nature may appear to you at times, she never inspires you with a sense of the ridiculous. And it is for that very reason, because of your innocent gravity, that you are the surest friend a man can have. In the first instance I inspired confidence and admiration in you, and now you show me pity.

"Dog! when we first met on the highway of life, we came from the two poles of creation; we belong to different species. I refer to this with no desire to take advantage of it, but rather with a strong sense of universal brotherhood. We have hardly been acquainted two hours, and my hand has never yet fed you. What can be the meaning of the

obscure love for me that has sprung up in your little heart? The sympathy you bestow on me is a charming mystery, and I accept it. Sleep, friend, in the place that you have chosen!"

Having thus spoken, M. Bergeret turned over the leaves of Ottfried Müller's *Manual,* which with marvellous instinct he had kept in his hand both during and after his fall. He turned over the pages, and could not find what he sought.

Every movement, however, seemed to increase the pain he was feeling.

"I believe," he thought, "that the whole of my left side is bruised and my hip swollen. I have a suspicion that my right leg is grazed all over and my left elbow aches and burns, but shall I cavil at pain that has led me to the discovery of a friend?"

His reflexions were running thus when old Angélique, breathless and perspiring, entered the study. She first opened the door, and then she knocked, for she never permitted herself to enter without knocking. If she had not done so before she opened the door, she did it after, for she had good manners, and knew what was expected of her. She went in therefore, knocked, and said:

"Monsieur, I have come to relieve you of the dog."

M. Bergeret heard these words with decided annoyance. He had not as yet inquired into his claims

to Riquet, and now realised that he had none. The thought that Madame Borniche might take the animal away from him filled him with sadness, yet, after all, Riquet did belong to her. Affecting indifference, he replied:

"He's asleep; let him sleep!"

"Where is he? I don't see him," remarked old Angélique.

"Here he is," answered M. Bergeret. "In my chair."

With her two hands clasped over her portly figure, old Angélique smiled, and, in a tone of gentle mockery, ventured:

"I wonder what pleasure the creature can find in sleeping there behind Monsieur!"

"That," retorted M. Bergeret, "is his business."

Then, as he was of inquiring mind, he immediately sought of Riquet his reasons for the selection of his resting-place, and lighting on them, replied with his accustomed candour:

"I keep him warm, and my presence affords a sense of security; my comrade is a chilly and homely little animal." Then he added: "Do you know, Angélique? I will go out presently and buy him a collar."

CHAPTER VII

MONSIEUR LETERRIER, the rector, who was of an arbitrary turn of mind, and whose philosophy leaned towards spiritualism, had never felt much sympathy for the critical intellect of M. Bergeret. A circumstance, memorable enough, had, however, brought them together. M. Leterrier had taken part in the Affair. He had signed a protest against the verdict, which he conscientiously considered illegal and mistaken. No sooner had he done so than he became the object of public anger and contempt.

The town, which numbered 150,000 inhabitants, only contained five people of the same opinion as himself with regard to the Affair; these were M. Bergeret, his colleague at the Faculté, two artillery officers, and M. Eusèbe Boulet. The two officers maintained the strictest silence on the subject, and the position of M. Eusèbe Boulet, as editor of the *Phare,* compelled him to express daily, and with no little violence, ideas which were contrary to his convictions, to rail at M. Leterrier, and hold him up to the scorn of all right-minded people.

M. Bergeret had written a letter of congratulation to his rector, and M. Leterrier called upon him.

"Do you not think," said M. Leterrier, "that truth contains a power that renders her invincible, and, sooner or later, ensures her final triumph? This was the belief of the great Ernest Renan; it has also been expressed more recently in words worthy to be engraved in bronze."

"It is precisely what I, personally, do not think," returned M. Bergeret. "On the contrary, I opine that in the majority of cases truth is likely to fall a victim to the disdain or insults of mankind and to perish in obscurity. I could give you many instances of this. Remember, my dear sir, that truth has so many points of inferiority to falsehood as practically to be doomed to extinction. To begin with, truth stands alone; she stands alone as M. l'Abbé Lantaigne says; for which reason he admires her. But there are no real grounds for such admiration, for falsehood is manifold, and so truth has numbers arrayed against her. That is not her only shortcoming. She is inert, is not capable of modification, is not adapted to those machinations which would enable her to win her way into the hearts and minds of men. Falsehood, on the other hand, possesses the most wonderful resources. She is pliant and tractable, and, what is more (we must not shrink from admitting as much), she is natural

and moral. She is natural, as being the product of the working of the senses, the source and fountain-head of all illusion; she is moral, because she fits in with the habits and customs of the human race, who, living in common as they do, founded their ideas of good and evil, their human and divine laws, upon the oldest, most sacred, most irrational, most noble, most barbarous, and most erroneous interpretations of natural phenomena. Falsehood is the principle of all that is beautiful and of good report amongst men. Do we not see winged figures and mythical pictures adorning their gardens, their palaces, and their temples? They lend a willing ear only to the lies of the poets. What makes you wish to destroy falsehood and to seek truth? Such an enterprise can only be inspired by decadent curiosity and culpable intellectual temerity. It is an attempt against the moral nature of man and the laws of society. It is a sin against the sentiments as well as the virtues of the nations. The growth of so many a calamity might well be fatal; were it possible to precipitate matters in that direction, everything would go to rack and ruin. But we know quite well that, as a matter of fact, the progress of truth is very slight and very slow, and encroaches but little upon falsehood."

"You are evidently not here referring to scien-

tific truths," said M. Leterrier. "Their progress is rapid, irresistible, and salutary."

"It is, unfortunately, beyond all question," replied M. Bergeret, "that the scientific verities which penetrate the average mind sink as though in a swamp, and drown. They cause no upheaval and are powerless to destroy error and prejudice. Truths of the laboratory which hold sovereign sway over you and me, Monsieur, have no authority over the minds of the general public. I will mention one example only, to prove this. The system of Copernicus and Galileo is absolutely irreconcilable with Christian philosophy, and yet you know that, both in France itself and the world over, it has penetrated even into the elementary schools without the very smallest modification being made in the theological conceptions it was calculated to annihilate. It is certain that the ideas of a man like Laplace make the old Judæo-Christian cosmogony appear as puerile as the painting upon the dial of a Swiss clock. And yet the theories of Laplace have been clearly exposed for nearly a century without in the least depreciating the value of the little Jewish or Chaldean legends which are still found in the Christian books on religion. Science has never harmed religion, and the absurdity of a religious practice may be clearly demonstrated without lessening the number of the persons who indulge in it. Scientific

truths are not acceptable to the public. Nations live on mythology, Monsieur; from legends they draw all the ideas necessary to their existence. They do not need many, and a few simple fables suffice to gild millions of lives. In short, truth has no hold on mankind, and it would be a pity if she had, for her ways are contrary to their nature, as well as to their interests."

"You are like the Greeks, M. Bergeret," said M. Leterrier. "You indulge in fine sophisms, and your reasonings are tuned to the flute of Pan. And yet, I believe with Renan, I believe with Émile Zola, that truth possesses within herself a penetrating force, unknown alike to error and to falsehood. I say 'truth,' and you understand my meaning, M. Bergeret. For the beautiful words, truth and justice, need not be defined in order to be understood in their true sense. They bear within them a shining beauty and a heavenly light. I firmly believe in the triumph of truth; that is what upholds me in the time of trial through which I am now passing."

"And may you be right, Monsieur le Recteur," replied M. Bergeret. "But, generally speaking, I think that the knowledge we have of men and facts seldom corresponds to the men themselves, or to the facts accomplished; that the means by which our minds can attain this correspondence are incomplete and insufficient, and that if time reveals

new ways of doing so, it destroys more than it produces. Madame Roland in prison displayed, to my mind, a somewhat childlike trust in human justice when she appealed with so firm a faith and so confident a mind to impartial posterity. Posterity is never impartial unless it is indifferent, and what ceases to interest it it straightway forgets. It is no judge, as Madame Roland fondly believed. It is a mob, as blind, wonder-stricken, miserable, and violent as any other. It has its likes, and, more especially, its dislikes. It is prejudiced, and lives in the present, knowing nothing of the past. There is no such thing as posterity."

"But," objected M. Leterrier, "there is such a thing as the hour of justice and reparation."

"Do you think," demanded M. Bergeret, "that the hour of justice and reparation ever sounded for Macbeth?"

"Macbeth?"

"Yes, Macbeth, son of Finleg, King of Scotland. Two great powers, legend and Shakespeare, have made of him a criminal. Now I am convinced, Monsieur, that he was a most excellent man. He protected the people and the clergy against the violence of the nobles. He was a thrifty king, a just judge, and the friend of the working classes. History bears witness to it. He did not murder King Duncan; his wife was not a wicked woman. She

was called Gruoch, and had three vendettas against the family of Malcolm. Her first husband had been burned alive in his castle. I have here on my table an English review containing materials which prove the goodness of Macbeth and the innocence of his wife. Do you think that if I were to publish these proofs I should succeed in altering public opinion?"

"I do not think so," replied M. Leterrier.

"Neither do I," said M. Bergeret, with a sigh.

At this moment a great clamour arose from the market-place. Some citizens, actuated by zeal for the Army, and in conformity with their recently formed custom, were on their way to break the windows of Meyer the bootmaker.

"Mort à Zola! Mort à Leterrier! Mort à Bergeret! Mort aux juifs!" they shouted; and as the rector gave way to some symptoms of distress and indignation, M. Bergeret pointed out to him that he must try and comprehend the enthusiasm of mobs such as this one.

"These people," he said, "are going to break the windows of a bootmaker, and will succeed in doing so without any trouble. Do you think they would be as successful, if, for instance, they had to put in windows or bells at General Cartier de Chalmot's? No, indeed! Popular enthusiasm is never constructive, but, on the contrary, essentially destructive.

This time it aims at our destruction; you must not attach too much importance to this particular instance, but rather seek out the laws which govern it."

"No doubt," replied M. Leterrier, who was frankness personified. "But, all the same, these events fill me with consternation. Can we callously look on at the overthrow of justice and truth by a people from whom Europe first learned the law, and who taught the meaning of justice to the whole world?"

CHAPTER VIII

MONSIEUR LE PREMIER PRESIDENT CASSIGNOL died in his ninety-second year, and, in accordance with his expressed wish, was carried to his grave upon a pauper's hearse. This clause in his will was silently condemned. All present were inwardly offended, as though the injunction were intended as a slur upon that object of universal respect, money, and as the ostentatious relinquishment of a privilege appertaining to the bourgeois class. They called to mind that M. Cassignol had always lived in very good style, observing, even in extreme old age, a punctilious nicety with regard to his personal habits, and, although he had been unceasingly employed in charitable works, none would ever have dreamed of saying, in the words of a Christian orator, "He loved the poor even to becoming as one of them." They did not believe the thing was done out of religious zeal, and looked upon it as a paradoxical piece of pride, the elaborate display of humility being received with the utmost coldness.

They regretted, too, that the deceased, who had

been an officer of the Legion of Honour, had directed that no military honours should be paid him. The state of the public mind, inflamed by the nationalist papers, was such, that open complaints at the absence of the military were heard among the crowd. General Cartier de Chalmot, who came in civilian attire, was greeted with profound respect by a deputation of lawyers. A great number of magistrates and clergy thronged around the house of mourning, and when, preceded by the Cross, and to the sound of bells and liturgical chants, the hearse moved slowly towards the cathedral accompanied by twelve white-coiffed nuns, and followed by a long grey and black line of boys and girls from the church schools, which stretched as far as the eye could see, the meaning of this long life entirely consecrated to the triumph of the Catholic Church was at once revealed. The whole town was there. M. Bergeret was among the stragglers following the procession, and M. Mazure, coming up to him, whispered in his ear:

"I knew that old Cassignol had been a fanatical zealot all his life, but I didn't know he was such a prig. He called himself a Liberal!"

"And so he was," answered M. Bergeret. "He had to be, because his ambition was to govern. Is it not through liberty that we progress along the

road to domination? My dear M. Mazure, I am indeed sorry for you!"

"Why?" asked the keeper of the records.

"Because, being in sympathy with the mob, you constantly display the same pathetic faculty for being deceived, and zealously march along in the procession of triumphant dupes."

"Oh, if you mean the Affair," replied M. Mazure, "I may as well warn you that we shall not agree at all."

"Bergeret, do you know that parson?" inquired Dr. Fornerol, glancing at a fat and agile priest who was sidling in among the crowd.

"Abbé Guitrel," exclaimed M. Bergeret. "Who does not know of Guitrel and his servant? Adventures recounted in days of yore by La Fontaine and Boccaccio are attributed to them. As a matter of fact, the Abbé's servant is of the age stipulated by the canons of the Church. A little while ago this priest, who will soon be a bishop, said something which was retailed to me, and which I in turn repeat to you. He said, 'If the eighteenth century may be called the century of crime, perhaps the nineteenth will be spoken of as the century of atonement.' What do you think of that? Suppose Guitrel were right."

"No," replied the keeper of the records. "The number of the emancipated increases from day to

day, and liberty of conscience has been set up once for all. The empire of science has been established. I am not, however, without some fears of a renewed attack by the clerical party, present circumstances favouring reaction. It really worries me, for I am not, like you, a dilettante. I have a fierce and anxious love for the Republic."

Chatting thus, they reached the open space in front of the cathedral. Over the heads of the people, bald, black, or hoary, the swell of the organ and the odour of incense were wafted through the great open doors from the warm twilight within.

"I'm not going inside," said M. Mazure.

"I will go in for a few minutes," said M. Bergeret. "I have a taste for ritual."

As he entered, the *Dies Iræ* was rolling out its spacious phrases. M. Bergeret was behind M. Laprat-Teulet. On the gospel side, in the part reserved for women, sat Madame de Gromance, lily-white in her black garments; her flower-like eyes void of all thought, which only made her all the more desirable in M. Bergeret's mind. The cantor's voice rang out in the great nave, singing a verse of the funeral chant:

"Qui latronem exaudisti
Et Mariam absolvisti
Mihi quoque spem dedisti."

"You hear, Fornerol," said M. Bergeret, "'*Qui latronem exaudisti*—— Thou, who didst pardon the thief, and absolve the adulteress, has given hope to me also.' No doubt the recital of such words to a large assembly of people is not without its impressive side, and the praise is due to those untutored and gentle visionaries of the Abruzzi, those humble servants of the poor, those amiable enthusiasts who renounced riches in order to escape from the hatred and ill-will that they engender. They were bad economists, these companions of St. Francis; M. Méline would show his contempt for them, if by any chance he ever heard them spoken about."

"Ah," said the doctor, "the companions of St. Francis were able to look ahead and to see of what material an assembly such as this of to-day would be composed."

"I believe the *Dies Iræ* was written during the thirteenth century in a Franciscan convent," replied M. Bergeret. "I must consult my friend, Commander Aspertini, on the subject."

In the meanwhile the burial service was drawing to a close.

While they followed the hearse that bore the magistrate's remains to the cemetery, M. Mazure, Dr. Fornerol, and M. Bergeret continued their conversation. As they were passing the house of Queen Marguerite, M. Mazure remarked:

"The agreement is signed. M. de Terremondre is owner of the ancient dwelling of Philippe Tricouillard, and intends to house his collection there, in the secret hope of selling it at a tremendous price some day to the town, whose benefactor he will thus become. By the way Terremondre has made up his mind; he is going to offer himself as progressive republican candidate for Seuilly, but every one knows in what direction his progress will tend. He is a turncoat from the Royalists."

"Hasn't he got the Government behind him?" asked M. Bergeret.

"He is supported by the *préfet,* and opposed by the *sous-préfet,*" replied M. Mazure. "The *sous-préfet* of Seuilly is led by the President of the Council, and Worms-Clavelin, the *préfet,* acts upon the instructions of the Minister of the Interior."

"Do you see that shop?" asked the doctor.

"The dyer's and cleaner's shop that belongs to the widow Leborgne?" said M. Mazure.

"Yes," replied Dr. Fornerol. "Her husband died six weeks ago in the most extraordinary way. He literally died of fright and nervous shock at sight of a dog which he believed to be mad, and which was as healthy as I am myself."

At the thought of death M. Mazure, who was a freethinker, felt a sudden longing come over him to possess an immortal soul.

"I do not believe a word of what is taught by the different churches that share in the spiritual guidance of the people," he said. "I know, none better, how dogma is formed, transformed, and elaborated. But why should we not possess a thinking principle, and why should not that principle survive the association of organic elements that we call life?"

"I should like," replied M. Bergeret, "to ask you what you mean by a thinking principle, but no doubt you would find it difficult to define."

"Not at all," returned M. Mazure. "I give the name to the cause of thought, or, if you prefer it, to thought itself. Why should not thought be immortal?"

"Yes, why not?" returned M. Bergeret.

"The supposition is by no means absurd," said M. Mazure, warming to his subject.

"And why," returned M. Bergeret, "should not a certain house in the Tintelleries, bearing the number 38, be inhabited by a M. Dupont? Such a supposition is by no means absurd. The name of Dupont is common enough in France, and the house of which I am speaking is divided into three parts."

"Now, of course, you're joking!" said M. Mazure.

"In a way I'm a spiritualist," said Dr. Fornerol. "Spiritualism is a therapeutic agent which must be reckoned with in the present state of medical science.

All my patients believe in the immortality of the soul, and dislike hearing it ridiculed. The good people of the Tintelleries quarter and elsewhere insist on being immortal, and it would grieve and wound them if any one were to suggest anything to the contrary. Madame Péchin, to wit, coming out of the greengrocer's over there with a basketful of tomatoes—if you were to go to her and say: 'Madame Péchin, you will taste the joys of heaven for hundreds of millions of centuries, but you are not immortal. You will live longer than the stars, you will still exist when the nebulæ have turned into suns, and after the light of those suns has died; you will live on in perfect happiness and glory during inconceivable ages, but you are not immortal, Madame Péchin!' If you were to say such things to her, she would not look upon them as good tidings, and if, by chance, your words were backed up by proofs infallible enough to convince her, she would be miserable; the poor old thing would be in despair, and would mingle tears with her tomatoes. Madame Péchin insists on being immortal; all my patients have a similar craving. You, M. Mazure, and you, too, M. Bergeret, have the same desire. Now I will confess to you that instability is the essential characteristic of the combined elements that go to form life. Shall I give you a scientific definition of life? It's a damned callous mystery!"

"Confucius," said M. Bergeret, "was a very sensible man. One day his disciple, Ki-Lou, asked him how to serve the demons and the spirits, to which the master replied, 'Man is not yet in a fit state to serve humanity, so how can he serve the demons and the spirits?' 'Permit me,' went on the disciple, 'to ask you what is death.' And Confucius replied, 'We do not know the meaning of life, how, then, can we understand death?"

The procession skirted the Rue Nationale, and passed in front of the college. Dr. Fornerol, being thereby reminded of his youthful days, began:

"That is where I studied. It is a long time ago now. I am much older than either of you. In a week I shall be fifty-six!"

"And so Madame Péchin really insists on being immortal?" asked M. Bergeret.

"She is convinced that she is immortal," answered the doctor. "If you told her that she was not, she would take a dislike to you, and disbelieve you all the same."

"And the idea of having to go on for ever amid the universal passing of things does not astonish her? She does not tire of nourishing such exaggerated hopes? Perhaps she has not given much thought to the nature of man and the conditions of life?"

"What does that matter?" replied the doctor.

"I cannot understand your surprise, my dear M. Bergeret. This good lady is a religious woman; religion, indeed, is her only possession. Having been born in a Catholic country, she is a Catholic, and she believes what she has been taught. It's only nature!"

"Doctor, you are talking like Zaïre," said M. Bergeret—— "Had I lived on the banks of the Ganges. Besides, the belief in immortality is common in Europe, America, and a part of Asia; it spreads in Africa with the wearing of clothes."

"So much the better," replied the doctor, "for it is necessary to civilisation. Without it the unfortunate would never resign themselves to their fate."

"Yet," retorted M. Bergeret, "the Chinese coolies work for paltry wages. They are patient and resigned, and they are not spiritualists."

"That is because they are yellow," replied the doctor. "The white races have far less resignation. They have conceived an ideal of justice, and formed great hopes. General Cartier de Çhalmot is quite right in saying that belief in a future life is necessary to an army. It is also very useful with regard to social intercourse; people would be worse than they are but for the fear of hell."

"Doctor," demanded M. Bergeret, "do you believe you will rise again?"

"It's different for me," replied the doctor. "I do not find it necessary to believe in God in order to be an honest man. As a scientist I know nothing; as a citizen I believe everything. I am a Catholic by policy, and consider that religious belief is essentially an improving element that helps to humanise the masses."

"That is a very widespread opinion," said M. Bergeret, "and its general acceptance renders it suspect in my eyes. Popular opinions hold good as a matter of course, without analysis, and if they were inquired into, generally speaking they would not pass muster. They are like the theatre-lover who for thirty years was able to attend the plays at the Comédie-Française by simply muttering 'feu Scribe' as he went in, to the man at the ticket-office. If investigated, his right of entry would never have been allowed to pass, but it never was investigated. How can one really believe religion to have a moralising effect when one reads the history of the Christian nations, and realises it to be a succession of wars, massacres and tortures. You cannot expect people to be more pious than cloistered monks, and yet monks of every order, black, white, brown, and pied, have been guilty of the most abominable crimes. The agents of the Inquisition and the priests of the League were pious, yet they were cruel. I do not mention the popes who drowned the world

in blood, for it is by no means certain that they really believed in a future life. The truth of the matter is that men are evil animals, and remain evil, even when they expect to go from this world into another, which is somewhat unreasonable, when one comes to think of it. All the same, I do not want you to imagine, doctor, that I deny Madame Péchin the right to believe herself immortal. I will even go so far as to say that she will not be disappointed when she departs this life, for a lasting illusion has some of the attributes of truth, and a person who is never disabused is never deceived."

By this time the head of the cortège had entered the cemetery, and the three gossips slackened their pace.

"If you were in my position, M. Bergeret," said the doctor, "and visited each morning a dozen or so of sick folk, you would realise, as I do, the power of the clergy. Come now, do you never find yourself desiring, if not believing in, immortality?"

"Doctor," replied M. Bergeret, "my thoughts on this subject are the same as those of Madame Dupont-Delagneau. Madame Dupont-Delagneau was very old when my father was very young. She was fond of him, and used to enjoy a chat with him; she was a link with the eighteenth century. I have heard him quote her again and again, and this, amongst others, is an anecdote I have heard him

relate. Once, when she was ill in the country, her parish priest went to visit her, and began to talk of a future life. With a little disdainful grimace, she retorted that she had her misgivings about the next world. 'You tell me,' she said, 'that the Creator of this world made the next too. All I can say is that I am already too well acquainted with His handiwork!' Thus, doctor, I am at least as mistrustful of the next world as was Madame Dupont-Delagneau."

"But," asked the doctor, "have you never dreamed of immortality achieved by science, or life on another star?"

"I always come back to the saying of Madame Dupont-Delagneau," replied M. Bergeret. "I should be too much afraid that the systems of Altair or Aldebaran would resemble our solar system, and that it would not be worth while changing. And as for being born again on this terrestrial globe —I think not, doctor, thank you!"

"But come now, really!" persisted the doctor. "Would you not, like Madame Péchin, like to be immortal, somehow or other?"

"All things considered," replied M. Bergeret, "I am content with being eternal, and, in my essence, I am that. As for the consciousness I enjoy, that is a mere accident, doctor, a momentary phenome-

non, like a bubble formed on the surface of the waters."

"Agreed! But it is better not to say so," replied the doctor.

"Why?" asked M. Bergeret.

"Because such notions are not suited to the masses, with whom you must agree outwardly, though inwardly you hold other views. It is community of belief that makes strong nations."

"The truth is," replied M. Bergeret, "that men of a common faith have no more urgent desire than to exterminate those who think differently, particularly if the difference is very slight."

"We are going to hear three speeches," said M. Mazure.

He was mistaken. Five speeches were made and no one heard a word. Cries of *"Vive l'armée!"* broke out as General Cartier de Chalmot went by, while Messieurs Leterrier and Bergeret were pursued by the hooting of the youthful Nationalists of the place.

CHAPTER IX

N a wet evening in May, the Brécé ladies were sitting together in the big drawing-room, knitting woollen bodices for the poor children of the village. Old Madame de Courtrai was standing with her back to the fire, holding up her skirts and warming her legs. The Duke, General Cartier de Chalmot, and M. Lerond were chatting, prior to a game of whist. The Duke opened the previous day's paper that was lying upon the table.

"Hostilities between the Americans and the Spanish have not yet started in earnest," he said. "What do you anticipate will be the outcome of it all, General? I should be very glad to have the opinion of so eminent a military authority as yourself."

"It would certainly be very instructive if you would tell us what you think about the forces that are about to try their strength in the Antilles and in the China seas, General," put in M. Lerond.

General Cartier de Chalmot passed his hand over

his forehead, opened his mouth some time before he spoke, and then said in an authoritative manner:

"The Americans have committed a very imprudent act in declaring war on Spain, and it may well cost them dear. Having no army and no navy, it would be a difficult matter for them to keep up a struggle against an efficient army and a well-trained navy. They have their stokers and their enginemen, but stokers and enginemen do not make a battle fleet."

"Do you think the Spaniards will win, General?" asked M. Lerond.

"Generally speaking, the success of a campaign depends upon circumstances impossible to prophesy," replied the General. "But it may at once be stated that the Americans are not ready for war, and war necessitates long and careful preparation."

"Come, General," cried Madame de Courtrai, "tell us that these American wretches will be beaten!"

"Their success is doubtful," replied the General. "I might even go so far as to say that it would be paradoxical, and an insolent contradiction of every system employed by those nations which are essentially military nations. As a matter of fact, the victory of the United States would constitute a condemnation of the principles adopted throughout

Europe by the most competent soldiers, and such a result is neither likely nor desirable."

"Good!" cried Madame de Courtrai, smacking her withered sides with her bony hands, and shaking her head, with its rough, grey locks that looked like a fur cap. "Good! our friends the Spaniards will be victorious! *Vive le roi!*"

"General," said M. Lerond, "I am most interested in what you say. The success of our friends would be well received in France, and who knows if they might not be the means of stirring up a Royalist and clerical movement in this country!"

"Pardon me," said the General. "I make no prophecy regarding the future. As I have said before, the success of a campaign depends upon circumstances impossible to foresee. All I can do is to take into consideration the quality of the conflicting elements, and from this point of view the advantage is certainly with Spain, although her fleet does not include a sufficiency of naval units."

"Certain symptoms," said the Duke, "would point to the fact that the Americans have already begun to repent of their temerity. I have heard it positively stated that they are panic-stricken. They live in daily dread of seeing the Spanish ironclads appear on their coasts. The inhabitants of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia are fleeing inland *en masse;* in fact, a general panic exists."

"Vive le roi!" repeated Madame de Courtrai, with fierce delight.

"What about little Honorine?" asked M. Lerond. "Is she still favoured with the visitations of Notre-Dame-des-Belles-Feuilles?"

"Yes," replied the dowager duchess, with some embarrassment.

"It would be a good idea," ventured the ex-deputy, "to make an official report of the child's statements of what she sees and hears when in her trances."

No reply was forthcoming to this remark, the reason being that, having undertaken to note down the words attributed by Honorine to the Blessed Virgin, Madame de Brécé very soon stopped doing so: the child's expressions were not nice. Besides, M. le Curè Traviès, who was in the habit of shooting rabbits every evening in the woods of Lénonville, had too often surprised Isidore and Honorine lying among the dead leaves to be any longer in doubt as to why they were there. M. Traviès was something of a poacher, but both his morals and his doctrine were sound. He gathered from repeated observations that it was hardly likely the Blessed Virgin would appear to Honorine.

He had spoken on the matter to the ladies of the castle, who were, if not convinced, at least somewhat perplexed. So when M. Lerond asked them

for details of the latest ecstasies, they changed the subject.

"If you care to hear news from Lourdes," said the dowager duchess, "we have some."

"My nephew writes me that many miracles take place in the grotto," said M. de Brécé.

"I have heard the same thing from one of my officers," replied the General. "He is a promising young fellow, and has come back amazed at the wonderful things he saw there."

"You know that the doctors in attendance at the piscina report the most miraculous cures?" said the Duke.

"We do not need the opinion of learned men to make us believe in miracles," said Madame de Brécé with a limpid smile. "I have far more confidence in the Blessed Virgin than in any doctors."

They then began to talk of the Affair, amazed, so they said, that the "syndicate of treachery" should continue its audacious manifestations unpunished. With much emphasis the Duke expressed himself as follows:

"When two courts martial have given their verdict, the smallest doubt can no longer exist."

"Have you heard," said Madame Jean, "that Mademoiselle Deniseau, the local prophetess, has learned from the mouth of St. Radegonde herself

that Zola is going to become a naturalised Italian, and will not return to France?"

This prophecy was received with much favour

A servant entered, bringing the letters.

"Perhaps there will be some news of the war," said the Duke, opening a paper.

And in dead silence he read the following:

"Commodore Dewey has destroyed the Spanish fleet in the port of Manilla. The Americans have not lost a man."

This telegram caused much depression in the drawing-room. The only person who continued to look confident was Madame de Courtrai, who cried:

"It's not true!"

"The telegram," said M. Lerond, "is an American one."

"Yes," said M. de Brécé, "we must beware of false news."

All endorsed this prudent view of things, and yet were aghast at the sudden vision of a fleet, blessed by the Pope, bearing the flag of His Catholic Majesty, and carrying on the prow of her vessels the names of the Virgin and the saints, disabled, shattered, and sunk by the guns of bacon merchants, sewing-machine manufacturers, and heretics, by a nation without kings, without princes, without a history, without national traditions, and without an army.

CHAPTER X

M. BERGERET'S affairs were worrying him; he was beginning to fear he might be asked to resign his position at the Faculté, when, to his surprise, he received the intimation that he had been appointed honorary professor there.

The news came to him one day, after his removal to his new rooms in the Place Saint-Exupère, at the very moment when he least expected it. His joy at the event was greater than his progress in ataraxy should have allowed. Vague and flattering hopes arose within him, and when M. Goubin, who had become his favourite pupil since the betrayal of M. Roux, came that same evening to take him for their usual stroll to the Café de la Comédie, he found him beaming all over with smiles.

The night was bright with stars, and as he went along the uneven pavements, M. Bergeret studied the sky. He was interested in the lighter side of astronomy, and pointed out to M. Goubin a beautiful red star over against Gemini.

"That is Mars," he said. "I wish there were

such things as glasses strong enough to see its inhabitants and their industries."

"But, dear Master," said M. Goubin, "were you not telling me some short time ago that the planet Mars was not inhabited, that none of the celestial bodies were inhabited, and that life, such as we conceive it, was a disease confined to our planet alone, a kind of decay spread over the surface of our rotting world?"

"Did I say that?" asked M. Bergeret.

"As far as I can remember that is what you said, dear Master," replied M. Goubin.

And his memory had not played him false. After the betrayal of M. Roux, M. Bergeret had asserted that organic life was but decay eating into the surface of our diseased world. He had also added that he hoped for the greater glory of the heavens that life in the distant worlds produced itself normally, by means of the geometrical forms of crystallisation. "Otherwise," he had added, "I could derive no pleasure from the contemplation of the star-spangled sky." Now, however, he was of a different opinion.

"You surprise me," he said to M. Goubin. "There are several reasons for concluding that all those stars now sparkling overhead contain life and thought. Even on this earth of ours, life occasionally has its pleasant side, and thought is divine. I

should much like to know something about yon sister star floating in thin ether in the face of the sun. She is our neighbour, and only separated from us by fourteen millions of leagues, which, astronomically speaking, is a very small distance indeed. I should like to know if the living beings upon the planet Mars are more beautiful than we humans are, and whether their intellect is vaster than our own."

"That is a thing we shall never know," replied M. Goubin, wiping his glasses.

"At any rate," went on M. Bergeret, "astronomers have studied the shape of that red planet by means of powerful telescopes, and they all agree in saying that they are able to distinguish innumerable canals upon its surface. Now, the hypotheses taken as a whole, hypotheses that are closely interdependent and form a great cosmic system, lead us to believe that this near neighbour of ours is older than the earth, from which we may deduce that her inhabitants, with a longer experience behind them, are wiser than ourselves. The canals of which I was speaking give to the huge tracts of land they traverse the appearance of Lombardy. To be quite correct, we can see neither the water nor the banks, but only the vegetation that grows along them, and which, to the observer, appears as a thin scattered line, pale or dark according to the season of the year. It is especially to be remarked at the equator

of the planet. We give the canals the earthly names of Ganges, Euripus, Phison, Nile, and Orcus. They appear to be irrigating canals, like those at which, it is said, Leonardo da Vinci worked with the skill of an excellent engineer. Their undeviating course, and the circular basins in which they terminate, are sufficient proof that they are both artificial and the result of mathematical calculation. Nature is mathematical, it is true, but not in the same manner.

"The canal which we call Orcus is very wonderful. Its course lies through a number of little round lakes, set at equal distances from one another, which give it the appearance of a rosary. We cannot doubt but that the canals of Mars have been constructed by intelligent beings."

Thus did M. Bergeret people the universe with seductive forms and sublime thoughts. He filled the empty spaces of the boundless heavens because he had been made an honorary professor. He was very wise, but also very human.

When he returned home, he found the following letter awaiting him:

"Milan.

"Dear Friend,

"You have relied too much upon my knowledge. I am sorry not to be able to satisfy the curiosity which you tell me stirred you during the funeral of M. Cassignol.

"The only interest I have taken in the old Church liturgies lies in their connection in one way and another with the writings of Dante, and I can tell you nothing upon the subject that you do not already know.

"The oldest mention of the chant is made about 1401 by Bartolommeo Pisano. Maroni attributes the *Dies Iræ* to Frangipani Malabranca Orsini, who was cardinal in 1278. Wadding, the biographer of the Franciscan Order Séraphique, ascribes it to Fra Tomaso da Celano, *qui floruit sub anno* 1250. Such attributions are altogether destitute of proof, but it is at any rate probable that it was composed in Italy during the twelfth century.

"In the seventeenth century the defective text of the Roman Missal was further impaired. A marble tablet preserved in the church of San Francesco at Mantua offers an older and more perfect version of the poem. If you would like me to do so, I will have the *Marmor Mantuanum* copied for you. I shall be delighted if you will make use of me in this as in other ways; nothing would give me more pleasure than to be able to serve you.

"In return, please be good enough to copy for me a letter, written by Mabillon and preserved in the town library; it is one of the Joliette bequest, collection B, No. 3715^{8}, folio 70. The passage that particularly interests me refers to the *Anecdota* of

Muratori. Coming from you I shall value it still more.

"It is my opinion, by the way, that Muratori did not believe in God. It has always been my wish to write a book on the atheist-theologians, the number of whom is considerable. Forgive me for the trouble to which I am putting you by asking you to visit the public library; I trust that you may be rewarded by a meeting with the golden-haired fairy who guards the entrance, and whose dainty ears listen to your flattering remarks the while she swings in her fingers the huge keys that lock away the ancient treasures of your town. Speaking of this fairy reminds me that my days of love are over, and that it is high time for me to cultivate some favourite vice. Life would be sad indeed if the rosy swarm of errant thoughts did not come sometimes to console the old age of the most respectable folk. I am safe in sharing such sound wisdom with a mind as rare and capable of comprehension as your own.

"When you come to Florence I will introduce you to a nymph who guards the house of Dante, and who is well worth your fairy. You will admire her chestnut hair, her black eyes, her full bust, and her nose you will consider a miracle of loveliness. It is of medium size, straight and fine, with delicate nostrils. I mention this particularly because you know

that nature is not good at noses, and too often spoils a pretty face by her clumsiness in that direction.

"Mabillon's letter, which I have asked you to copy for me, commences thus: 'Ni les fatigues de l'âge, monsieur . . .' Forgive me for worrying you, and believe me to be your sincere friend,

"Carlo Aspertini.

"P.S.—Why will the French persist in upholding an error of justice which is now beyond all question, and which they could quite easily set right without harming any one? I can find no solution to their conduct in this matter. All my countrymen, all Europe, and the whole world share my amazement. I should very much like to have your opinion regarding this extraordinary affair.

"C. A."

CHAPTER XI

IN the clear light of early morning the quarters were full of the passing to and fro of the men on duty, sweeping the cobbles, or grooming down the horses. At the far end of the yard, clothed in his canvas trousers and dirty blouse, stood Private Bonmont, with his comrades, Privates Cocot and Briqueballe, peeling potatoes in front of a cauldron full of water. Now and then a squad, under the conduct of a non-commissioned officer, rushed down the stairs like a torrent, scattering on its way the invincible gaiety of the young.

The most characteristic feature of these men who had been taught to march was their step, a heavy, laboured step, crushing and sonorous. Important-looking pay-sergeants continually passed by with account-books of all sizes under their arms. Privates Bonmont, Cocot and Briqueballe were peeling potatoes and throwing them into the cauldron, and as they did so they gave vent to the most harmless of thoughts in words that were few but of an exceeding coarseness. Private Bonmont was thinking deeply.

In front of him, beyond the barrack gates that

closed in the courtyard of the huge building, stretched a circle of hills with villas nestling in the purple branches of the trees, and sparkling in the morning sun. There resided the actresses and light women brought to the town by the presence of Private Bonmont. A whole swarm of women, bookmakers, journalists belonging to sporting and military papers, jockeys, procurers, male and female, and swindlers of all descriptions, had settled down in the vicinity of the barracks where the rich conscript was serving his time. As he peeled the potatoes, he might have congratulated himself on being able to bring together so Parisian a society at so great a distance from Paris. But he knew life well and men better, so his pride was in no way flattered by the achievement. He was worried and morose. Life held only one ambition for him, and that was the badge of the Brécé Hunt. He longed for it with inherited tenacity, with the forcefulness that his father, the great Baron, had shown in his conquest of souls, bodies, and things, but not with the deep, clear-sighted thought or genius of his stupendous parent. He felt himself inferior to his wealth; this made him unhappy, and, in consequence, spiteful.

"They only give their blessed badge to dukes and peers, I know," he reflected. "The Brécés are overrun with Americans and Jewesses, and I'm as good as they any day!"

He threw his peeled potato angrily into the cauldron, at which Private Cocot, with a big laugh and a big oath, cried out:

"There he goes, upsetting the broth, damn him!"

And Briqueballe, who was a simple soul, and of the same year, made merry at the jest. He rejoiced, too, at the thought that he would soon see his father, who was a harness-maker at Cayeux, and his home again.

"That old hypocrite Guitrel will do nothing for me," thought Private Bonmont. "He is a clever chap, is Guitrel, cleverer than I ever thought. He has made his own conditions. So long as he is not bishop he will not say anything to his friends, the Brécés. He is a deep beggar, and no mistake!"

"Bonmont," said Briqueballe, "stop chucking the peelings into the pot!"

"It's a dirty trick!" said Cocot.

"I'm not on duty this week," objected Bonmont.

Thus spoke these three men because they were on an equal footing.

Bonmont went on thinking:

"I can do without Guitrel. There are plenty of others who will get the badge for me. Terremondre, for instance; he knows the Brécés well. His family is quite good, and he's all right—but not to

be relied upon; he's a dodger, a regular dodger! He'll promise everything and do nothing."

"I couldn't very well ask old Traviès, who goes out helping Rivoire the poacher. There is General Cartier de Chalmot; he'd only have to open his mouth—but the old crock hates me."

These were Private Bonmont's opinions, and they were not altogether unfounded. General Cartier de Chalmot did not like him. "If little Bonmont were under me I'd make him sit up," he was in the habit of saying. As for the General's wife, her indignation regarding him knew no bounds since the day she had heard him say at a ball: "Putting all sentiment aside, mother is too damned lazy." No, young Bonmont was not mistaken, it was no good looking for help either from the General or his wife.

He searched his memory to try and discover some one to render him the service which Guitrel had refused him. M. Lerond? He was too cautious. Jacques de Courtrai? He was in Madagascar.

Young Bonmont heaved a deep sigh. As he peeled his last potato a sudden inspiration came to him.

"Supposing I made Guitrel a bishop! That would be rich!"

As this idea flashed through his brain a torrent of curses sounded in his ears.

"Nom de Dieu! Nom de Dieu! Misère de

misère!" yelled Briqueballe and Cocot, as a shower of soot fell suddenly upon them, around them, and into the cauldron, soiling their wet fingers, and blackening the potatoes, which a moment before had been ivory white.

Looking up to seek the cause of their trouble, they espied through the black shower some of their comrades upon the roof removing a long chimney flue, and shaking out the soot with which it was filled. As they caught sight of them, Cocot and Briqueballe cried as with one voice:

"Hi! you up there! what the devil are you doing?"

And they hurled at their comrades all the curses their simple souls could conjure up. They were innocent curses, full of genuine anger, and they filled the barrack yard with echoes in the accents of Picardy and Burgundy. Then the face of Sergeant Lafile, with its slight moustache, appeared over the edge of the roof, and, amid the sudden silence, a sarcastic voice rasped out these words:

"Three days for you two down there. Do you understand?"

Briqueballe and Cocot stood overwhelmed by the hard blows of fate and discipline, while their companion, Private Bonmont, reflected:

"I can make a bishop right enough. I've only got to speak to Huguet, and it's done!"

Huguet was then president of the council. His cabinet was a moderate one, supported by the Conservatives. When forming it, Huguet had been careful to safeguard capital, gaining thereby a calm self-confidence and not a little pride. He was Minister of Finance, and was supposed to have given stability to the public credit, which had been shaken by his Radical predecessor.

He had not always been so clever a statesman. He had been a Radical in his hard-working youth, a Radical, and a revolutionary even. He had been private secretary to the late Baron de Bonmont, for whom he wrote books and edited papers. In those days he was a democrat, and a dreamer in matters of finance. That was the baron's wish, for the great man was anxious to conciliate the progressive factions of Parliament, and therefore liked to appear generous and even something of a dreamer too. This was what he called "giving himself room." It was he who made his secretary member for Montil; Huguet owed everything to him, and young Bonmont realised all this.

"I shall only have to say the word to Huguet," he thought. That was how he put it to himself, at any rate. But he was not really sure of it, for he knew that M. Huguet, President of the Council, was careful to avoid any encounter with Private Bonmont and did not like to be reminded of the

old ties that had associated him with the great baron, who had died so opportunely, amid dawning rumours of scandal. So, on second thoughts, Private Bonmont sagely decided that it would be necessary to find some one else.

He sat down upon the ground beside the pump, that he might be able to think more at his ease, and was soon lost in meditation. In his imagination every person who might, he thought, prove capable of disposing of the episcopal crozier and mitre filed in a long procession before him. Monseignor Charlot, M. de Goulet, Worms-Clavelin, the *préfet,* Madame Worms-Clavelin, and M. Lacarelle crossed his mental vision, and many others beside. He was awakened from his reverie by Private Jouvencie, licentiate in law, pumping water down his back.

"Jouvencie," said Bonmont solemnly, wiping his neck, "what is Loyer minister of?"

"Loyer? Minister of Public Instruction and Public Worship," replied Jouvencie.

"Does he appoint the bishops?"

"Yes."

"You are sure?"

"Yes, why?"

"Oh, nothing," replied Bonmont.

But to himself he said:

"I've got it—Madame de Gromance!"

CHAPTER XII

HAT same evening M. Leterrier came to see M. Bergeret.

At the sound of the bell Riquet leapt down from the couch he was sharing with his master, and, with one eye on the door, set up a terrific barking. When M. Leterrier came into the room, the dog received him with hostile growls; the portly form and full, grave countenance fringed with grey beard, were not familiar to him.

"You too!" murmured the rector gently.

"Please excuse him," said M. Bergeret. "He is a domesticated animal. When men undertook the training of his forefathers, and, in so doing, formed the characteristics he has inherited, they themselves regarded a stranger as an enemy. They did not inculcate in dogs charity towards the human race. Thoughts of universal brotherhood have not entered the soul of Riquet; he stands for the old order of things."

"And a very ancient one," replied the rector, "for it is, of course, clear that nowadays we live in unity, peace and concord, with one another!"

He spoke these words with a bitterness not natural to him, but for some time past his thoughts and speech had changed.

However, Riquet continued to bark and growl; he was evidently doing his best to scare away the stranger by his voice and fearsome appearance, but, as fast as the enemy advanced, he retreated. He was a faithful house-dog, but cautious withal.

At last his master, growing impatient, picked him up by the scruff of the neck, and gave him two or three taps on his nose, whereupon Riquet immediately stopped barking, wriggled, and put out a pink, curling tongue to lick the hand that had chastised him, his beautiful eyes full of gentle sadness the while.

"Poor Riquet," sighed M. Leterrier, "that is all you get for your zeal."

"I must drive things into his head," replied M. Bergeret, pushing him behind him at the back of his chair. "Now he knows he was wrong to greet you in such fashion. Riquet conceives of one evil only, physical suffering, and of but one happiness, the absence of suffering. He identifies crime and punishment, inasmuch as for him a misdeed is a deed that is punished. If by accident I step on his paw, he feels himself to be the guilty party, and begs my pardon; justice and injustice do not trouble his infallible wisdom."

"Such philosophy spares him the mental anguish some of us are experiencing to-day," said M. Leterrier.

Since the day he had signed the protest of the "Intellectuals" M. Leterrier lived in a state of perpetual astonishment. He had set forth his reasons in a letter to the local newspapers, and could not understand his opponents who called him a Jew, a Prussian, an "Intellectual," and said that he had been bought. What also surprised him was that Eusèbe Boulet, the editor of the *Phare,* referred to him daily as a disloyal citizen and an opponent of the Army.

"Would you believe it?" he cried. "They have dared to put in the *Phare* that I insult the Army! *I* insult the Army! I who have a son serving with the colours!"

The two professors spoke at length of the Affair, and M. Leterrier, of the still guileless soul, repeated:

"I cannot understand why political considerations and party passions should be brought into the affair at all. It is a question of moral right, and far above such things!"

"Exactly!" replied M. Bergeret. "But you would not be in a state of perpetual astonishment if you would only remember that the passions of the mob are simple and violent, and that it is impossible to reason with such people. Few men are

clever enough to keep control of their minds during difficult investigations, and it has required sustained attention on our part to discover the truth of the matter. It has required sustained attention, and the force of minds trained to the examination of facts with method and sagacity. Advantages such as these, and the satisfaction of knowing oneself in possession of them are well worth a few contemptible insults."

"When will it all end?" asked M. Leterrier.

"In six months, perhaps, or twenty years—or never," replied M. Bergeret.

"Where will they draw the line?" asked M. Leterrier. *"Scelere velandum est scelus.* It is killing me, my friend, it is killing me!"

It was true. His sense of right and wrong had gone awry, he was feverish and his liver was out of order.

For the hundredth time he expounded the proofs which he had amassed, with all the prudence of his mind and all the zeal of his heart. He exposed the first causes of the error, which slowly but surely appeared behind the masses of untruth which had veiled it. Then, strong in the conviction of right, he vigorously demanded:

"What answer can they give?"

At this point of the conversation the two pro-

fessors heard a great clamour rising from the street. Riquet lifted up his head and listened anxiously.

"What is it now?" asked M. Leterrier.

"It is nothing," replied M. Bergeret, "only Pecus!"

It was, indeed, as he had said a crowd of people uttering loud cries.

"I think I hear *'Conspuez Leterrier!'* " said the rector. "They must have heard that I am here!"

"I think so too," said M. Bergeret, "and I believe that they'll soon be shouting *'Conspuez Bergeret!'* Pecus is fed on ancient ideas, and his aptitude for error is considerable. Feeling himself incapable of bringing reason to bear upon hereditary prejudices, he prudently sticks to the heritage of nursery tales, handed down by his forefathers. This particular kind of wisdom preserves him from errors that would otherwise do him harm. He keeps to the old and tried errors. He is imitative, and would be more so, were it not that he involuntarily deforms everything he imitates, such deformations going by the name of Progress. Pecus never thinks, and it is unjust to stay that he deceives himself. To his unhappiness, be it said, everything combines to deceive him. He knows not the meaning of doubt, for doubt springs from thought. Yet his ideas are ever changing, and at times his stupidity turns to violence. He excels in nothing, for everything that

is in any way excellent flies before him, and ceases to be his. He wanders and languishes and suffers. We must give him deep, sorrowful sympathy; we must even venerate him, for it is from him that all virtue, all beauty, and all human glory spring. Poor Pecus!"

As M. Bergeret was pronouncing these words, a stone came hurtling through the window and fell upon the floor.

"There is an argument!" said the rector, picking up the stone.

"And rhomboid in shape," said M. Bergeret.

"It bears no inscription," said the rector.

"That is a pity!" answered M. Bergeret. "Commander Aspertini found at Modena some sling stones used by the soldiers of Hirtius and of Pansa against the followers of Octavius, in the year 43 B.C. These stones bore inscriptions, indicating whom they were intended to strike. M. Aspertini showed me one destined for Livy. I leave you to guess in what form the soldier's humour couched the terms of the inscription."

His voice was drowned at this point by cries of *"Conspuez Bergeret! Mort aux juifs!"* which rose from the square.

Taking the stone from the hands of the rector, M. Bergeret placed it upon his table to serve as a

letter-weight, and as soon as he could hear himself speak, went on with his remarks:

"Horrible cruelties were committed after the defeat of the two consuls at Modena. It cannot be denied that society has improved since then."

The crowd went on yelling, however, and Riquet replied to it with heroic barks.

CHAPTER XIII

EING in Paris on sick leave, young Bonmont went to see the Automobile Exhibition that was being held near the Terrasse des Feuillants, in the Jardin des Tuileries. As he walked down one of the side galleries reserved for parts and accessories, he examined the Pluto Carburettor, the Abeille Motor, and the Alphonse Lubricator, with an unenthusiastic eye and a weary curiosity. With a curt nod or wave of the hand he returned the greetings of timid young men and obsequious old ones. He was neither proud nor triumphant, but simple, rather common-looking, and armed only with the undeviating and tranquil air of malevolence that stood him in such good stead in his dealings with men; he went his way, a short, hunched-up, rather hump-backed little figure, broad-shouldered, strong and vigorous enough, although already attacked by disease.

He went down the steps of the terrace, and while examining the trade-marks distinguishing the different lubricating oils, he came upon one of the statues of the gardens, which had been shut in the tent

enclosure; it was a classical study in the French style, a bronze hero whose academic nudity displayed the sculptor's skill, and who in a fine gymnastic attitude was felling a monster to the ground. Misled, no doubt, by the apparently sporting air of the group, and never reflecting that the statue had probably been in the garden long before the Exhibition, Bonmont instinctively began to wonder what connexion it could have with motoring. He thought that the monster, a serpent, which, as a matter of fact, did look like a tube, was intended to represent a pneumatic tyre, but his thoughts were very hazy and confused. He turned aside his lack-lustre gaze almost immediately, and entered the great hall where the cars on platforms complacently displayed the clumsy, imperfectly developed, and still ill-balanced forms which at the same time struck the onlooker with an irritating impression of self-satisfaction and conceit.

Young Bonmont was not enjoying himself there; he never enjoyed himself anywhere. But he might have found a certain pleasure in inhaling the odour of rubber and oils that filled the air; he might have examined the autocars and autolettes with a little interest, but that for the moment he was possessed by one single idea. He was thinking of the Brécé Hunt, and the longing to obtain the badge filled his very soul. From his father he had inherited this

tenacious will and the burning intensity with which he coveted the Brécé badge was mingled in his veins with the fever of incipient phthisis. He longed for it with all the impatience of a child—for his mind was still very childish—and he longed for it with the cunning tenacity of a calculating and ambitious man—for he knew human nature well, having in a few years learned many things.

He knew that, as far as the Duc de Brécé was concerned, he, with his French name and his Roman title, was still Gutenberg, the Jew. He also realised the power of his millions, and he knew more upon this subject than will ever be grasped by peoples or their rulers. So he was neither deluded nor discouraged. He took in the situation accurately, for he was clear-headed. True the anti-Jewish campaign had been conducted with the utmost vehemence in agricultural districts like his own, which contained no Jews, but a large number of clergy. Recent events and the newspaper articles had been a great strain upon the feeble head of the Duc de Brécé, the leader of the Catholic party in his Department. Doubtless, the Bonmonts were of the same way of thinking as the grandsons of *émigrés,* and were as full of Royalist devotion and quite as zealous Catholics as himself. But the Duke could not forget their origin—he was a simple, obstinate man, and young Bonmont was well aware of this. He re-

viewed the situation once again in front of the Dubos-Laquille motor omnibus, and came to the conclusion that the best way of obtaining the de Brécé badge was to procure the bishop's crozier for M. l'Abbé Guitrel.

"I must have him nominated," he reflected. "It is absolutely necessary. It will be easy enough once I know how to set about it." And, full of regret, he added, "Father would have advised me in the matter if he had lived. He must have made more than one bishop in Gambetta's time."

Although he was not quick at generalisation, he went on to remind himself that anything could be bought for money, a thought which imbued him with great confidence in the success of his enterprise. Reflecting thus, he looked up and saw young Gustave Dellion a little in front of him, looking at a yellow-wheeled car.

Dellion caught sight of Bonmont at the same moment, but pretending he had not seen him, he beat a retreat behind the body of the vehicle. He was under long-standing financial obligations to Bonmont, and, for the present, was in no way prepared to discharge them. The mere sight of his friend's blue eye gave him a hollow feeling in the pit of his stomach, for it was Bonmont's habit to stare silently and terribly at those of his friends who owed him money. Dellion knew all about that, and was much

surprised when the little bull, as he termed him, joined him in his retreat between the canvas wall of the tent and the yellow-wheeled car, holding out a friendly hand, and saying with a pleasant smile:

"How are you? Nice car! A bit long in the body, but not so bad, is it? That's what you want for Valcombe, my dear Gustave. Yes, indeed! There's a pretty puff-puff that would rip along nicely between Valcombe and Montil."

The mechanic who was standing by the motor thought good to intervene, and to point out to M. le Baron that the vehicle could be turned into an open six-seater, or a closed phaeton with seats for four. Seeing that he was dealing with connoisseurs, he launched out into technical explanations.

"The motor is composed of two horizontal cylinders; each piston works a crank inclined at 180° to its neighbour."

In businesslike terms he demonstrated the advantages of such a combination. Then, in answer to a question by Gustave Dellion, he said that the carburettor was automatic, and to be regulated once for all at the moment of starting.

He stopped speaking, and the two young fellows stood there silent and attentive. At last, pushing his stick between the spokes of one of the wheels, Gustave Dellion remarked:

"Do you see, Bonmont? Steering is done by differential gear!"

"It is very easy to handle," said the mechanic.

Gustave Dellion loved an automobile, and not, like Bonmont, with an already satiated love. He gazed at the vehicle which, in spite of the stiffness of modern body-work, looked like a great animal, a conventional, banal, though well-behaved monster, with an apology for a head between the lamps that looked like two huge eyes.

"Not such a bad puff-puff," whispered young Bonmont to his friend. "Why don't you buy it?"

"Buy it? Can you do anything you like when you are so unfortunate as to possess a father!" sighed Gustave Dellion. "You don't know what a nuisance a family is—what a worry." Then, with feigned assurance, he added, "And that, my dear Bonmont, reminds me that I owe you a small——"

A friendly hand fell upon his shoulder, cutting him short, and to his surprise there stood at his side a little fair man, his head sunk between his shoulders, giving him the appearance of a slight hump, broad-chested, and strong-backed—a little, simple-looking, fair man, who regarded him with extraordinarily kind blue eyes and a sweet smile.

"You old fool!" said this little man, suggesting a good-natured little buffalo shedding his wool on the bushes out of pure kindness of heart.

Gustave no longer recognised the Bonmont he had known, and was both touched and surprised. Jumping into the car, the little Baron began to handle the steering-wheel under the benevolent eye of the mechanic.

"So you drive, Bonmont?" ventured Gustave with deference.

"Occasionally," returned young Bonmont.

Then, with one hand upon the steering-wheel, he related a motor-tour he had made in Touraine during one of his absences on sick leave, from which he always returned worse than he went away. He had done thirty miles an hour. Of course, the roads were dry and in good condition, but there were cattle, children, and frightened horses to pass, all of which might have caused trouble. You had to keep your eyes about you, and never let the other fellow touch the wheel. He related a few incidents of the tour, one adventure with a milkwoman standing out particularly in his mind.

"I saw the old woman coming along," he said, "taking up the whole of the road with her horse and cart. I sounded my horn, but the old creature never moved aside. Then I made straight for her. She was new to that trick. She drew up by the side of the road, pulling so hard at her horse that he fell in a heap with the cart, milk-pails, old woman and all, upon a pile of stones; so I left them to it

and went on," concluded young Bonmont, as he jumped out of the car. "And, in spite of the dust and the noise, motoring is a very pleasant way of getting about. You try it, my dear fellow."

"He is a good sort, after all," thought young Dellion admiringly. And his wonder grew when, dragging him along by the arm through the great hall, Bonmont said to him:

"You are quite right. Don't buy that motor. I'll lend you my runabout. I shan't want it, because I've got to go back, my leave is nearly up. Besides—— By the way, do you know if Madame de Gromance is in Paris?"

"I believe so, but I am not quite sure," replied Gustave. "It is some time since I saw her."

This was in one way an honourable falsehood, for at ten minutes past seven on the preceding evening he had left Madame de Gromance in her room at the hotel where they had their rendezvous.

Bonmont did not reply, but, coming to a full stop before a notice in two languages, forbidding smoking, he gazed at it silently and thoughtfully. Gustave, following his example, remained speechless, thinking it would not be prudent to bring the interview to an end. So he added:

"But I may see her again soon. I *can* see her, if you will tell me——"

The little Baron looked him straight in the eyes, and said:

"Would you like to do me a favour?"

Gustave assented with the enthusiasm of a good-natured soul and the uneasiness of a person suddenly embarked upon a difficult enterprise. It was none the less true that Gustave could do Ernest de Bonmont a favour, and the latter proceeded to enlighten him on the subject.

"If you would like to do me a favour, my dear Gustave, get Madame de Gromance to go and see Loyer, and ask him to make Abbé Guitrel a bishop." And he added, "You would do me a genuine service."

To this request Gustave replied by a stupefied silence and a startled look, not that he intended to refuse, but because he had not grasped the situation. Young Bonmont had to repeat the same words twice over, and to explain that Loyer was Minister of Public Worship and nominated the bishops. He was very patient, and little by little Gustave understood what was required of him; he even managed to repeat what he had heard without making a single mistake:

"You want me to tell Madame de Gromance to go and ask Loyer, who is Minister of Public Worship, to make Guitrel a bishop?"

"Bishop of Tourcoing."

"Tourcoing! Is that in France?"

"Of course."

"Ah!" said Gustave thoughtfully, and he fell into a reverie.

Serious objections came to him, and, at the risk of appearing disobliging, he would mention them. It seemed to him that the request entailed a good deal, and he did not want to enter upon it lightly. Timidly and hesitatingly he formulated his first objection, which was a natural one.

"It isn't a trick, is it?" he asked.

"What do you mean by a trick?" said Bonmont shortly.

"No, really," protested Gustave, "you aren't pulling my leg?"

He was still in doubt, but the contemptuous look of the little fair man dispersed all doubt.

With great firmness and decision he declared:

"As long as I know it is a serious matter, you can rely upon me. I can be serious when necessary."

He was silent awhile, and the difficulties confronting him again rose in his mind. Gently and timidly he said:

"Do you think that Madame de Gromance knows the minister well enough to ask such a—a—favour? Because, you know, she never mentions Loyer to me."

"And that," replied the little Baron, "is probably

because she has other subjects to discuss with you. I don't mean that she is keen on Loyer, but she thinks him a good old sort, and no fool. They got to know each other three years ago on the platform at the unveiling of the statue to Jeanne d'Arc. Loyer would be only too delighted to do anything to please Madame de Gromance, and I can assure you he isn't a bad sort. When he puts on his best coat he looks like a retired fencing-master. She can go and see him all right, he will be quite nice to her—and he will most certainly do her no harm!"

"In that case," said Gustave, "she is to ask him to make Guitrel a bishop."

"Yes."

"Bishop of where did you say?"

"Bishop of Tourcoing," repeated young Bonmont. "I'd better write it down for you."

Picking up from a table before him the trade card of the builder of the "Reine des Pygmées," he wrote upon it with his little gold pencil, "Make Guitrel Bishop of Tourcoing."

Gustave took the card, and the idea which at first had appeared to him so strange and weird now seemed a simple and natural one. His mind had grown accustomed to it, and as he put the card in his pocket he repeated in the glibbest way:

"Make Guitrel Bishop of Tourcoing. Right you are! You can rely on me."

In this manner the words of Madame Dellion were fulfilled, who speaking of her son one day had said, "Gustave does not learn quickly, but he remembers what he has learned, and that is perhaps best."

"You know," said Ernest seriously, "I can answer for Guitrel making a good bishop."

"So much the better," replied Gustave, "because——" And he did not finish his sentence.

They had now reached the exit, however.

"I shall be in Paris until the end of the week," said Bonmont. "Let me know how things are going; there is no time to lose, for the candidates are being chosen now. We will speak of the car at another time."

As they reached the flight of flag-decorated steps, he took Gustave's hand in his and, holding it, impressed upon him:

"No one must know. The thing is of the utmost moment, my dear Dellion, that no one shall know; not a soul must know that Madame de Gromance is going to Loyer at your request. Now that is understood, is it not?"

"Quite," replied Gustave, heartily shaking his friend's hand.

The same evening at eight o'clock young Bonmont went to visit his mother, whom he did not often see, but with whom he was on the friendliest

possible terms, and found her finishing her toilet in the dressing-room.

While her maid was arranging her hair she looked away from her reflection in the glass, and turning to her son:

"You don't look well," she said.

Ernest's health had been worrying her for some time. Rara provided her with other more painful worries, but her son was, for all that, a source of anxiety.

"How are you, mother?"

"Oh, I'm very well."

"You look it."

"Did you know that your Uncle Wallstein has had a slight stroke?"

"I'm not surprised; he shouldn't be so gay at his time of life, it's unnatural."

"He is not so very old, only fifty-two."

"Fifty-two is not what you might call youthful, exactly. By the way, what about the Brécés?"

"The Brécés? What about them?"

"Did they thank you for the ciborium?"

"They sent their card, with a pencilled word of thanks."

"That's not much."

"Well, *mon petit,* what else did you expect?"

She rose to her feet and raised her hands above her head to fix a diamond cluster in her hair;

standing thus her bare arms looked like two handles springing from a beautifully shaped amphora. Her shoulders gleamed under the electric light which shone through transparent shades shaped like bunches of fruit, and in the golden whiteness of the skin delicate blue veins ran down to the swell of her bosom. Her cheeks were rouged and her lips painted, but her face was still youthful in its health and vigour. The lines of her neck, which might have betrayed the passage of the years, were lost in the beauty of the skin.

Young Bonmont studied her carefully for a few moments, and then said:

"Mother, suppose you go and see Loyer too, and ask him about Abbé Guitrel?"

CHAPTER XIV

MADAME DE BONMONT, who had chosen Raoul Marcien from among all others, and who loved him with deep affection, was justified for the space of a few weeks in congratulating herself upon her choice, and in believing herself a happy woman. A tremendous change had taken place in the order of things. Raoul, who had formerly been despised or disliked in all circles of society, who had been rejected by his regiment, cut by his friends, cast off by his relations, expelled from his club; who was known in all the courts of law by reason of the repeated charges of swindling brought against him, had suddenly become cleansed of all stain and purified of all dishonour. Certain events, guessed at, no doubt, and soon to be made clear, had interested the Government on his behalf. It was exceedingly necessary that Raoul should pass for an honourable man. In public and in private, ministers maintained that the power and glory of France and the peace of the whole world depended upon this.

His honour was of public utility, and each and all

did their best to make it an established fact. The Government worked to this end, as did the lawyers and the newspapers, in fact all good citizens worked joyfully for its establishment. Madame de Bonmont experienced both pleasure and uneasiness at the sudden transformation of her lover into an example and a model for all Frenchmen. She was made for the enjoyment of tranquil joys and pleasures *à deux*, and all this fame astonished and made her ill at ease. When with Raoul she had the fatiguing sensation of living perpetually in a lift.

Evidences of the esteem in which he was held amazed the simple Elizabeth both by their number and extent. Congratulations, flattering pledges, good-conduct certificates, compliments, and praises poured in from all the bodies known and unknown, and from all the public societies in town and country. They came from the courts, the barracks, the archbishops' palaces, from the town halls, *préfectures* and great houses of France. They rang out in the street riots, and resounded with the bugles during torchlight processions. His honour shone proudly forth nowadays; it flamed into being like a huge cross at an illuminated fête. Whether he went to the Palais de Justice, or to the Moulin-Rouge, he was greeted by the acclamations of the crowd, and princes begged for the honour of touching his hand.

And, in spite of all this, Raoul was not at peace.

When in the little first-floor apartment hung with sky-blue draperies, intended by Madame de Bonmont to shelter their mutual love, he was always sombre and violent. When he heard his worth and praises shouted in the streets, when he could not listen to the rumbling wheels of an omnibus or the shriek of a tram without knowing that both vehicles contained the supporters and guardians of his honour, he still remained plunged in the bitterest, most dismal thoughts and cherished terrible designs. With frowning brows and clenched teeth he muttered curses; he chewed threats as a sailor chews his tobacco. "Scoundrels! Wretches! I'll run them through the body!" It may seem almost impossible, but is, nevertheless, true, that he was unconscious of the people's acclamations; he did not hear them, and the only people he thought of were his few accusers, all of whom were believed to be dispersed, destroyed and reduced to powder. In his imagination he saw them standing before him, with threatening faces, and at sight of them terror made his yellow eyes start from his head.

His fury was a source of consternation to poor Madame de Bonmont, who only heard hoarse cries of hatred and vengeance coming from the lips which should have given her kisses and words of love. And she was the more surprised and uncomfortable because her lover's threats were di-

rected as much against friend as against foe. For when he spoke of "running them through," Raoul never stopped to make the subtle distinction between his defenders and his adversaries. His great mind took in the whole of his country, yes, and the whole of the human race.

He would spend hours every day pacing up and down like a caged lion or panther in the two little rooms that Madame de Bonmont had hung with blue silk and furnished with cosy lounges in the hope of better things. "I'll do for them!" he muttered as he strode up and down.

Seated in one corner of the big couch she would follow his movements with a timid look, and listen anxiously to his words; not that the sentiments expressed by him appeared to her in any way unworthy of her beloved; instinctively submissive, naturally docile, she admired strength in all its forms, and flattered herself with the vague hope that a man who was capable of such wholesale slaughter, might also, at another time, be capable of wonderful embraces. And sitting at one end of the couch, she waited with half-closed eyes and gently heaving bosom for her Raoul's mood to change.

She waited in vain! The vociferations continued to make her start:

"I'll do for them!"

Occasionally she would timidly try to appease his

fury; in a voice as full as her figure she would murmur:

"But they are doing you full justice, dearest—every one knows you to be a man of honour!"

It may be true that the slender, dark-haired David succeeded in calming the fury of Saul with his shepherd's lute, the sound of which was thinner than a cricket's chirrup; Elizabeth, less fortunate than he, vainly offered to Raoul the Nirvana of her sighs and the splendour of her pink and white self. Without daring to look at him, she ventured to say:

"I cannot understand you, *mon ami.* You have confounded your detractors, the General embraced you in the middle of the street the other day, and the ministers . . ."

She got no further; he burst out:

"You mention those blackguards to me! They are only trying to find some way of getting at me. They would like to see me a hundred feet under the ground. But they had better be careful! I will devour them piecemeal!"

Then he came back to his dear, familiar thought:

"I must do for them!"

This was his dream:

"I should like to be in an immense marble hall full of people, and to lay about me with a big stick, to strike for days and nights, until the floor, the ceiling, and the walls were red with blood!"

She vouchsafed no reply, but only looked in silence at her breast, where lay the little bunch of violets she had bought for him and dared not offer.

He gave her no more love. It was over and done with. The hardest-hearted man would have taken pity on the pretty, gentle creature who, with her voluptuous body and skin of milk and roses, resembled some big, warm flower in its beauty, neglected, abandoned, and left without care or culture.

She was suffering, and, being piously inclined, she sought a remedy in religion. Thinking that an interview with Abbé Guitrel would be of great service to Raoul, she resolved to bring the priest and her lover together.

CHAPTER XV

BEFORE dressing, Philippe Dellion pulled aside the window-curtains, and, looking out into the light-spangled night, watched the carriage lamps passing to and fro in the busy street. For a moment or two the sight pleased him; he had been in this room, separated from the outer world, for the space of two hours.

"What are you looking at, *mon petit?*" asked Madame de Gromance, sitting up in the bed and arranging her tumbled hair. "Do strike a light, it is impossible to see a thing."

He lighted the candles that stood in little copper stands on either side of a gilded clock adorned with shepherds and shepherdesses. The gentle light reflected itself in the wardrobe and made the rosewood cornice glisten. Little rays flickering everywhere in the room, lit up the scattered garments and died gently away in the curtains' folds.

The room was an apartment in a highly respectable hotel, in a street near the Boulevard des Capucines. Madame de Gromance, in her wisdom, had selected it, refusing to have anything to do with

the less subtle arrangements of Philippe, who had hired a little *rez-dechaussée,* in the lonely Avenue Kléber. It was her opinion that a woman who wished to keep her affairs to herself must see that they take place in the very heart of Paris, in some respectable hotel frequented by people of divers races and tongues. She hardly ever spent more than two consecutive months in Paris, but she frequently met Philippe there, and in far greater security than she could have done in the provinces.

As she sat on the edge of the bed, the soft light fell upon her fair fluffy hair, the milk-white skin of her sloping shoulders, and her pretty but somewhat drooping breast.

"I am sure I shall be late again," she said. "Tell me the time, *mon petit,* and don't make a mistake. It's really important!"

"Why do you always call me *'mon petit'?* Ten past six," he returned in a surly voice.

"Ten past six? Are you quite sure? I call you *'mon petit'* because I love you. What would you have me call you?"

"I call you Clotilde, you might occasionally call me Philippe."

"I never do call people by their names."

"Oh, well! no matter!" he said bitterly. "I don't presume to imagine that I shall change your habits."

She picked up her stockings from the floor,

stretching her back like a cat about to pounce upon a mouse.

"What does it matter? I never think of calling you by your Christian name, as I do my husband, or my brother, or my cousins."

"All right! all right!" he replied. "I will conform to custom."

"What custom?"

Jumping up with her stockings in her hand, she came across the room and kissed him upon the neck.

Though by no means a clever man, he was suspicious, and an idea that had lately struck him was worrying him; he suspected that Madame de Gromance was careful to avoid making use of his name, or of the name of any other lover, for fear of getting mixed in a moment of supreme excitement, for she was a sensitive soul!

He was not exactly jealous, but he had a certain amount of proper pride. Had he known that Madame de Gromance was unfaithful to him, his vanity would have suffered. On the other hand, the desire he had for the pretty creature was proportionate only to the desire he believed her to inspire in others. He was not at all sure that it was considered necessary to be the lover of Madame de Gromance, or of any other society woman; many of his intimate friends preferred an automobile to a mistress. He liked her well enough, and had no

objection to being her lover so long as it was considered the thing, but if it was not, he could not see why he should persist in the matter. The deep animal instinct in him and his outlook as a man of the world scarcely agreed, and he was not clever enough to conciliate such conflicting elements, the result being that there was an imperfect, indeterminate tone about his remarks that rather fascinated Madame de Gromance, who would not take the trouble of finding the solution and making things clear. If it came to the point, his charmer would say to him, "Of course I've never loved any man but you!" but that was less in the hope of convincing him than in the desire to say the thing most fitting the occasion. And at such moments when reflection is at a disadvantage the tremendous difficulty presented by belief in such a statement never occurred to him. Later, when he began to reason, doubt assailed him.

His doubt found expression in cruel and sarcastic remarks, and he practised the art of keeping his mind in a state of vague unrest. On this particular occasion he was less sulky and bitter than usual, and hardly even jealous or mistrustful. He merely displayed the ill-humour that naturally follows gratified desire.

Madame de Gromance, on the contrary, was quite prepared for the blackest fit of spite and unkind-

ness, for on that very day her strength, combined with her weakness, her natural inspiration and deep artifice, had obtained from him a more liberal display of affection than that which on principle he usually vouchsafed. She had led him to overstep the bounds of moderation, a thing he did not easily forgive, for he was solicitous of his health, and keen on keeping in condition for exercise and sport. Whenever Madame de Gromance led him further than he wished, he afterwards avenged himself by unkind words and a still more unkind silence. She did not mind, for she loved love, and experience had taught her that all men are disagreeable as soon as they get what they want. So she calmly awaited the reproaches she knew she deserved. She was disappointed in her expectations, however, for a remark from Philippe showed her that his mind was quiet and at rest.

"My shirtmaker is an ass," he said.

He carefully dressed himself before the glass, and turned great thoughts over and over in his mind. After a few moments of silence he asked in quite a pleasant tone:

"You know Loyer, don't you?"

Fresh-complexioned and slightly flushed with her white figure thrown into relief by the dark velvet of the arm-chair, she was sitting buttoning her boots. As she sat there, with her head and neck bent over

her crossed legs, the light shone upon her hair and upon the bare limbs revealed by the short garment she wore, making one think of an allegorical figure from some painted Venetian ceiling. This resemblance did not, however, strike Philippe. He repeated his question:

"Do you know Loyer?"

She lifted her head, dangling the buttonhook from the tips of her fingers.

"Loyer, the Cabinet Minister? Yes, I know him."

"Do you know him well?"

"Not very well, but I do know him."

The man under discussion, Loyer the senator, keeper of the seals and Minister of Public Worship, was an insignificant-looking old bachelor, honest enough outside politics, a bit of a lawyer, and a philosopher, whose hair had turned grey in the enjoyment of clandestine love and tavern nights. As he had not made his entry into society until somewhat late in life, the women he met there were a continual source of wonder to him, as he devoured them with gold-spectacled eyes.

He was very young for his sixty years, and had known how to appreciate Madame de Gromance at her true value when he had first met her in the drawing-rooms of the *préfecture*. That was seven years ago.

Loyer had come to the town of M. Worms-Clavelin to unveil a statue to Joan of Arc, and had then pronounced the memorable speech that terminated magnificently with a comparison between the Maid and Gambetta, each of whom was transfigured, said the orator, "by the sublime light of patriotism." The Conservatives, who already were secretly siding with the Radicals, because of their financial policy, were grateful to the minister for binding them anew to the old régime with the honourable bonds of a generous sentiment.

M. de Gromance had offered him his hand, saying: "As an old Royalist, Monsieur le Ministre, I thank you for Jeanne and for France!"

When Loyer walked that evening with Madame de Gromance in the gardens of the *préfecture,* lighted up by hundreds of Chinese lanterns, fixed to the trees—trees that had been planted in 1690 by the Benedictines of Sillé, so that two centuries later Madame Worms-Clavelin might enjoy their shade —the minister, who had been told by the Préfet himself that the "old Royalist" was the most deluded husband in the Department, whispered a few gallantries into the young woman's pink ear. He was a Burgundian, and prided himself on being a daring one at that. Impressed by the beauty of the historic evening, he remarked as he took leave of Madame de Gromance that the illuminations made

him inclined to dream. Madame de Gromance liked Loyer, and subsequently begged of him several little favours on behalf of her parish and district, which the old fellow granted, demanding nothing in return, quite content with being allowed to pat the arms and shoulders of the beautiful *ralliée* and to ask in a jocular manner after her "Old Royalist."

She could therefore quite well allow that she knew Loyer, who was in the Radical Cabinet as Minister of Public Worship.

"I know Loyer as one knows a person who does not belong to the same set as oneself. Why do you ask?"

"Because if you know him well enough, I want you to ask him to do something for me."

"What! Do you want to bear off the academic honours like M. Bergeret?"

"No," said Philippe seriously. "It is something more important. I want you to speak to him about Abbé Guitrel."

In her surprise she stood up, revealing a glimpse of dazzling flesh above her stockings. Astonishment gave her the semblance of innocence.

"Why?" she demanded.

He was carefully knotting his tie.

"I want Loyer to make him bishop."

"Bishop!"

The word produced abundant and definite ideas in the mind of Madame de Gromance.

For years and years she had seen the short, fat figure, mitre-crowned and covered with the gold-embroidered cope, rubicund, shapeless, dignified, of Monseigneur Charlot, officiating on fête-days at the cathedral. She had often dined with him and had received him at her own table. In common with all the other ladies of the diocese, she admired the clever repartee and handsome red-stockinged calves of the cardinal-archbishop. She also knew a considerable number of bishops, all of whom were worthy men, but she had never reflected on the influences that confer episcopal dignity upon a priest. It seemed to her strange that a kind-hearted but common and coarse-minded man like Loyer should have the power to create a prelate like Monseigneur Charlot.

She sat there, thoughtful, looking around the room, from the tumbled bed to the little table, upon which were placed a bottle of sherry and some biscuits; from the chair on which she had thrown some of her garments to the untidy dressing-table, her beautiful, unintelligent eyes wandered, seeing nothing but lace rochets, crosiers, crosses, and amethyst rings. Feeling absolutely at a loss, she inquired:

"Do you think bishops are made like that?"

"Of course," he replied with assurance.

"And so you think, *mon petit,* that if I were to ask Loyer to make Abbé Guitrel a bishop——"

He assured her that Loyer, who was an old gallant, would not refuse that to a pretty woman.

She fixed her pink silk knickers to a hook on her silk stays. Then, as he pressed for a reply, and insisted upon her going immediately to see the minister, she grew exceedingly curious, and not a little suspicious.

"But, *mon petit,* why do you want Abbé Guitrel to be made a bishop? Why?"

"To please Mother. And because I like the fellow; he is intelligent and up to date—there aren't so many like him. Yes, he really is advanced and in the Pope's good books besides. And Mother would be so delighted."

"Then why doesn't she go herself and settle the business with Loyer?"

"In the first place, darling, it wouldn't be at all the same. Besides, my parents are not in very great favour with this Cabinet. My father, as President of the Chambre Syndicale des Métaux, has been protesting against the new tariffs. You cannot imagine how irritating these economic questions can be."

But she knew quite well that he was deceiving

her, and that it was not filial love that made him dabble in ecclesiastical affairs.

She went round the room in her pink knickers of flowered silk, lithe, agile, and pliable, stooping here and there over the scattered garments, searching for her petticoat.

"*Mon petit,* I want your advice——"

"What about?"

After spending an unconscionable time arranging his tie in front of the glass, and lighting a cigarette, he complacently sat watching her as she flitted about the room in a costume that exaggerated so prettily all that was feminine in her exceedingly feminine body. He did not know whether to think her graceful or ridiculous. He did not know whether he ought to think such things really unbeautiful, or whether he should experience some slight artistic pleasure in beholding them. His doubt arose from the recollection of a long discussion which had taken place the winter before in the smoking-room at his father's house, between two old gallants, M. de Terremondre, who could think of nothing more adorable than a pretty woman in her knickers and stays, and Paul Flin, who, on the contrary, pitied a woman for her ungraceful appearance at this particular stage of her toilet. Philippe had followed this entertaining discussion, and could not make up his mind which of the two was right. Terremondre

was a man of experience, but he was old-fashioned and too artistic. Paul Flin was considered less clever, but very smart. Philippe's natural malevolence and elective affinities were making him incline to the latter's theory when Madame de Gromance put on her pink silk petticoat.

"*Mon petit,* do advise me. This year fur dresses are all the rage, but what do you say to a red cloth dress—a rich red, say ruby—a fur coat and a fur toque with a bunch of Parma violets?"

He did not speak, and only betrayed his thought by a nod of the head. At last he opened his mouth, whence issued, instead of words, the smoke of his cigarette.

Deep in her dream she continued:

"With buttons of old paste, very narrow sleeves and a tight skirt."

He spoke at last:

"A tight skirt—yes, that would be all right."

Then she remembered that he knew nothing about skirts or bodices. An idea flashed into her mind and matured.

"It is funny!" she cried. "Only the men who do not care about women are interested in women's dress. And the men who like them never notice what they wear. Now you, for instance. I am sure you could not tell me what dress I had on last Saturday at your mother's, while little Suequet,

whose tastes, as everybody knows, are different, talks *lingerie* and *chiffons* quite prettily. He is a born dressmaker and milliner, that boy! Tell me, how do you account for it?"

"It would take too long."

"You are sitting on my skirt, *mon petit.* While I think of it, Emmanuel says that you are neglecting him. Yesterday he expected you to come and see a horse that he wants to buy, and you didn't turn up. He's awfully annoyed!"

At these words Philippe broke into a torrent of abuse.

"Your husband bores me to tears! He's a grotesque fool—and the most awful bore! You must admit yourself that pottering about all day in his stables, his kennels, and his kitchen garden—for he goes in for gardening too, the duffer—looking at the dogs' food, the horses, and such-like isn't what you might call exciting. And then when one comes to think of you and me, I must say it is a bit thick for your husband to hang on to me as he does. He's such a fool that he makes people talk. It's perfectly true, I tell you, people are beginning to talk."

She answered him gently and seriously while she slipped on her skirt.

"Don't abuse my husband, Philippe. As I am obliged to have a husband of some sort, it is a very good thing mine is like he is. Just think for a mo-

ment, *mon petit,* we might have somebody much worse to deal with."

Philippe's anger would not be calmed.

"And he loves you, the beast!"

She made a little grimace and shrugged her shoulders, as if to imply that that was not worth mentioning. That is how Philippe chose to interpret it, for he went on to enlarge upon the subject.

"As far as that goes, any one can see at a glance that he's not much of a man with the women, but, even then, some things don't bear thinking about."

Madame de Gromance turned to Philippe a beautiful look full of happiness and peace, a look that counselled the banishment of all painful thoughts, and going up to him placed full upon his lips a kiss, magnificent as a royal scarlet seal.

"Mind my cigarette," he said.

By this time she was clothed in a very simple grey dress, and was arranging her toque upon her fluffy hair. Suddenly she broke into a laugh, and he inquired the cause of her amusement.

"Oh, nothing!"

Then, as he persisted in his inquiry:

"Well, I was only thinking that when your mother went to see her lover—years ago, you know—she must have found her hair a terrible nuisance, that is if she wore it as it is in that portrait you have of her at home."

He made no reply, not quite knowing how to treat a joke of this description, which inwardly shocked him.

"You're not angry, surely," she went on. "You do love me, don't you?"

No, he was not angry; yes, he loved her; and she returned to her original idea.

"It is strange, you know. Sons always believe in the virtue of their mothers; daughters, too, but not so implicitly. And yet the fact of a woman having had children is surely not sufficient to prove that she has never had lovers."

She reflected a moment, and then went on:

"Things are complicated in this world. Good-bye, *mon petit.* I am walking, and have only just time to get there."

"Why are you walking?"

"Because it is good for my health, and then it explains my not having the carriage. And it's rather fun."

She scrutinised herself in the looking-glass, first three-quarter-ways, then sideways, finally glancing at her back view.

"At this hour of the day, for instance, I am sure to collect a good number of followers."

"Why?"

"Because I look rather nice."

"What I mean is, why at this hour specially?"

"Because it is evening. The streets are always full just before dinner-time."

"But who follows you? What sort of people?"

"All sorts. Men about town, workmen and priests. Yesterday a nigger followed me. He had on a hat that shone like a mirror. He was awfully sweet."

"Did he speak to you?"

"Oh, yes. He said: 'Madame, will you go for a drive with me? Or are you afraid of losing your reputation'?"

"What a silly remark!"

"Some of them say much sillier things," she answered gravely. "Adieu, *mon petit,* we've had a lovely time to-day."

Her hand was already on the key of the door when he stopped her.

"Clotilde," said he, "promise me you will go and see Loyer, and that you will say to him very nicely, 'M. Loyer, you have a vacant see to dispose of. Make Abbé Guitrel bishop, you cannot do better. The Pope thinks very highly of him.' "

She shook her pretty head.

"Go and see Loyer for that? Can you imagine me in the cage of that old gorilla? We must make some special arrangement, meet him at some friend's house, or something of the sort."

"But," objected Philippe, "it's very important.

At any moment Loyer may sign the appointments now. There are several vacant sees."

She reflected a moment, and, making a special effort to think clearly, said:

"You must be mistaken, *mon petit,*" said she. "It's *not* Loyer who appoints the bishops. It's the Pope, really it is, or the Nuncio. I can prove that, for the other day Emmanuel said, 'The Nuncio ought to overcome the modesty of M. de Goulet, and offer him a bishopric.' So you see."

He tried to convince her to the contrary, taking the trouble to explain the reason why.

"Listen to me! The minister chooses the bishops, and the Nuncio confirms the minister's choice. That is what is called the Concordat. You must say to Loyer: 'I know of an intelligent liberal-minded priest, one that the Pope thinks of very highly'——"

"Yes, yes, I know!" She opened wide eyes of wonder. "It's an extraordinary thing you are asking of me, *mon petit!*"

Her amazement came from the fact that she was religious, and had the greatest veneration for holy things. He was a little less religious than she, but perhaps a trifle more scrupulous, and in his innermost self he recognised that she was right, and that it was an extraordinary thing to ask of her. But

he was so anxious for the matter to be concluded that he hastened to reassure her.

"I am not asking you to do anything forbidden by religion," he protested.

In the meanwhile her first curiosity had returned.

"But why do you want M. Guitrel to be chosen, *mon petit?*" she asked.

He answered confusedly, as he had done before:

"Mother would be pleased, and other people too."

"What other people?"

"Oh, heaps of them—the Bonmonts."

"The Bonmonts? But they are Jews!"

"That doesn't matter; there are Jews even among the clergy."

Madame de Gromance grew more suspicious as soon as she learned that the Bonmonts were mixed up in the singular affair, but being affectionate and easily led she promised Philippe she would do as he asked.

CHAPTER XVI

M L'ABBÉ GUITREL, candidate for the episcopacy, was ushered into the study of the Nuncio, Monseigneur Cima, whose appearance at first sight came as a surprise, for his pale, large-featured countenance, on which the years had left traces of fatigue, showed no signs of age. At forty, he looked rather like a sickly youth, and when he cast down his eyes his face was as the face of a dead man. He signed to the visitor to be seated, and, assuming his usual attitude, leaned back in his easy chair, and prepared to listen to him. With his right elbow in his left hand, and his head resting in the hollow of his right hand, he had a grace that struck one as vaguely funereal, and called to mind certain figures on ancient bas-reliefs. When in repose his face was veiled in melancholy, but as soon as he smiled it radiated humour. The gaze of his beautiful dark eyes gave one a feeling of discomfort; at Naples he was said to possess the evil eye; in France he passed for a clever politician.

M. l'Abbé Guitrel thought it advisable to make only a passing allusion to the object of his visit.

Mother Church in her wisdom might dispose of him as she judged good. All his feelings of love for her were blended in an entire obedience to her will!

"Monseigneur," he added, "I am a priest, in other words a soldier, and I aspire to the glory of obedience!"

Slowly bending his head, as a sign of approbation, Monseigneur Cima asked the Abbé if he had been in any way acquainted with M. Duclou, the late Bishop of Tourcoing.

"I knew him when he was Curé at Orleans, Monseigneur."

"Orleans? A pleasant town, I have relations there, distant cousins of mine. M. Duclou was very old when he died. Do you know what caused his death?"

"Stone, Monseigneur."

"The cause of the death of many old men, although science has discovered many things to mitigate this terrible malady."

"Yes, indeed, Monseigneur!"

"I used to know M. Duclou at Rome; he often had a rubber of whist with me. Have you ever been to Rome, M. Guitrel?"

"Monseigneur, that is a joy so far denied me, but I have long sojourned there in thought. My

spirit has outstripped my body in its journey to the Vatican."

"Yes, yes; the Pope would be very pleased to see you. He likes France very much. The best time for a visit to Rome is during the spring, for in summer malaria is rife in the countryside, and in some parts of the city even."

"I do not fear malaria."

"Of course not. Besides, provided one takes certain precautions, one can always ward off fevers; you must never go out at night without your cloak, and foreigners especially should never go out in open vehicles after the sun has set."

"I have heard, Monseigneur, that the Coliseum by moonlight is a truly wonderful sight."

"The air is treacherous in that district, and the gardens of the Villa Borghese are also to be avoided for the same reason."

"Really, Monseigneur?"

"Yes, yes! I, who am Roman-born, cannot endure the climate of Rome. I prefer to go to Brussels. I was there for a year some time ago, and can think of no town that I like better. I have relations there. Tourcoing, is that a large town?"

"About 40,000 inhabitants, I believe, Monseigneur. It is a manufacturing town."

"I know! I know! M. Duclou used to tell me in Rome that he could only find one fault with his

flock: they drank beer. He used to say that if they would only drink the light wines of Orleans they would be the most perfect Christians in the world, but hops made them melancholy."

"M. Duclou was a very witty man."

"He disliked beer, and once I surprised him very much by telling him that it was quite popular in Italy nowadays. There are very prosperous German beer-houses in Florence, Rome, Naples, and most of the other towns. Do you like beer, M. Guitrel?"

"I do not dislike it, Monseigneur."

The Nuncio gave his ring to the priest, who kissed it and took a respectful leave.

The Nuncio rang the bell.

"Show M. Lantaigne in."

Having kissed the ring, the director of the Grand Séminaire was invited to sit down and state his business.

He said:

"Monseigneur, I have sacrificed to the Pope and to necessity all the ties that bound me to the Royal House of France; I have trampled down the nearest hopes of my heart, which was only what I owed to the Father of the Faithful and the unity of the Church. If His Holiness raises me to the see of Tourcoing, I will rule it in his interest and in the

interest of France. A bishop is a ruling power, and I can answer for my steadfastness and devotion."

Slowly bending his head as a sign of approbation, Monseigneur Cima asked Abbé Lantaigne whether he had been in any way acquainted with M. Duclou, the late Bishop of Tourcoing.

"I only knew him slightly," replied M. Lantaigne, "and long before his elevation to the bishopric. I remember having lent him some of my sermons when I had more of them than I knew what to do with."

"He was not young when we lost him. Do you know what caused his death?"

"I do not know."

"I knew M. Duclou in Rome; he often used to play a rubber of whist with me. Have you ever been to Rome, M. Lantaigne?"

"Never, Monseigneur."

"You should go. The Pope would be very pleased to see you; he likes France very much. But you must be careful when you go; the climate of Rome is bad for foreigners. During the summer malaria is rife in the countryside, and even in some parts of the city. The best season to visit Rome is the spring. I was born in Rome, of Roman parents, and I much prefer Paris or Brussels. Brussels is a very pleasant town. I have relations there. Tell me, Tourcoing, is it a very large town?"

"It is one of the oldest sees of Northern France,

"I love you."

And only the darkness heard the rest.

. . . . . .

The same evening, in his modest apartments—the apartments of "a child of the quarter," as he called them—Anselme Raimondin heard the result of the election. There were some dozen bottles of wine and a cold *pâté* on the dining-room table. His failure amazed him.

"It was only what I expected," he said.

And he swung round in a pirouette, but he was clumsy and twisted his ankle.

"It's your own fault," said Dr. Maufle, by way of consolation. The Doctor was president of his Committee, an old Radical, with the face of a Silenus. "You allowed the Nationalists to poison the whole ward; you hadn't the pluck to stand up against them. You made no attempt to unmask their falsehoods. On the contrary, like them, with them, you told every lie you could think of. You knew the truth, and you dared not undeceive the electors while there was still time. You've funked it, and you are beaten, and it serves you right!"

Anselme Raimondin shrugged his shoulders.

"You are a silly old fool, Maufle. You don't understand the ins and outs of this election. Yet it's clear enough. My failure was due to one thing only: the discontent of the small shopkeepers who

enemy and to re-establish around me the oneness of belief. In the depths of her innermost soul, France is Christian, and only needs energetic leaders. The Church is dying from sheer inanition."

Monseigneur Cima rose from his chair, and held out to Abbé Lantaigne his golden ring, saying:

"You must go to Rome, M. l'Abbé, you must go to Rome!"

CHAPTER XVII

HE drawing-room of the house in the grey Batignolles quarter was humble, the only decorations being copies of the engravings in the Louvre, little statues, cups and dishes of Sèvres china, trivial-looking ornaments, which somehow proclaimed the fact that the lady of the house was connected with Government officials.

Madame Cheiral, *née* Loyer, was the sister of the Minister of Justice and Public Worship. She was the widow of a commission-agent in the Rue d'Hauteville, who had died without leaving a penny, and she had attached herself to her brother, partly for the sake of a home, and partly out of maternal ambition. She ruled the old bachelor, who ruled the country, and had forced him to take as his secretary-in-chief her son Maurice, who was not fitted for anything in particular, and was good for nothing except some public office.

Uncle Loyer had a room in the little flat of the Avenue de Clichy, where he came to stay for a while every spring, at which season he was subject to attacks of giddiness and drowsiness, for he was get-

ting old. As soon, however, as his head felt better and his tread became more assured, he returned to the attic-room, where he had lived for half a century, a room where he had twice been arrested by the agents of the Empire, and from which he could see the trees of the Luxembourg. He still kept the pipe of Jules Grévy in this garret of his.

This pipe was perhaps the most treasured possession of the old fellow, who had gone through many phases as a Member of Parliament: the days of eloquence and the days of affairs. He had controlled as Minister of the Interior the secret funds of three budgets. He had bought many a conscience for his party, a corrupter of others, but incorruptible himself. He had always had an infinite indulgence for the hypocrisies of his friends, but was jealous himself of retaining in the midst of his power the vantage-ground of a simulated poverty that was at once cynical, obstinate, deep-rooted, and honourable.

His eye was dim now and his mind inactive, but in the intervals, when his old skill and decisive spirit returned to him, he applied all his remaining vigour to concentrated thought, and the game of billiards. Madame Cheiral, whose intelligence was limited and whose skill but moderate, did what she liked with the cunning, quiet, silent, and coarse-minded old man, who for the sixth time in his career had been selected as a member of the cabinet that had fol-

lowed upon the heels of the clerical cabinet, and who saw his nephew fulfilling the indefinite duties of secretary-in-chief without an idea of leadership, nor a glimmer of moral principle. No doubt, Loyer was somewhat surprised to find that his nephew had reactionary and clerical tendencies, but he was too much inclined to apoplexy to run the risk of thwarting his sister.

Madame Cheiral was staying at home that day, and when Madame Worms-Clavelin called to see her somewhat late in the afternoon, when no further callers were expected, she received her very cordially. They wished each other good-bye, for the *préfet's* wife was returning home on the morrow.

"Going already, darling?"

"I must," replied Madame Worms-Clavelin sweetly, looking quite innocent in her black feather-trimmed hat.

She always affected this hat when paying calls, likening herself to a plume-bedecked horse attached to a funeral car.

"You must stay and dine with us, dear; we so seldom see you in Paris. We shall be quite alone. I don't think my brother will be here. He is so busy and engrossed in his work just now! But perhaps Maurice will be with us; the young men of to-day are much steadier than they used to be. Maurice often spends an evening home with me."

She began to try to prevail upon Madame Worms-Clavelin with all the persuasive eloquence of a sociable soul.

"We shall be quite among ourselves. Your dress will do very nicely. I assure you we shall be absolutely *en famille*."

Now Madame Worms-Clavelin had obtained from the Minister of the Interior the Cross of the Legion of Honour for her husband; she had exacted from the Minister of Instruction and Public Worship a promise that the name of M. Guitrel, as candidate for the bishopric of Tourcoing, should be on the list of candidates selected for the six vacant sees, so there was nothing to keep her any longer in Paris. She had intended to return home that very evening.

She excused herself, saying that she had "so many things to see to," but Madame Cheiral insisted; then, as Madame Worms persisted in her refusal, she showed her displeasure by tightened lips and acid tones, so Madame Worms-Clavelin, who had no wish to annoy her, gave in.

"That's right; and, as I said before, we shall be quite by ourselves."

They were by themselves, for Loyer never came, and Maurice, who was expected, did not turn up

either. But in their place came a lady tobacconist* and a well-known elementary school teacher. The conversation was deep and serious. Madame Cheiral, who really was only interested in her own affairs, and who had no spite against any one except her dearest friends, picked out the men whom she thought worthy of the Senate, the Chamber, and the Institute, not that she cared about politics, science, or literature, but because she thought it her duty, as the sister of a Cabinet Minister, to hold opinions on everything that contributed to the moral and intellectual greatness of her country.

Madame Worms-Clavelin listened to her with charming deference, always retaining the same air of innocence that she reserved for people who bored her. When in society she had a way of looking down which gave old gentlemen a thrill, and which to-day excited the admiration of the hoary-headed instructor of grammar and gymnastics, who endeavoured to press her foot with his own under the table. However, she had made up her mind to return by train from the Avenue de Clichy to the Arc-de-Triomphe, where, among the radiating avenues that look like an enormous cross of honour, her boarding house was situated. But when she re-

* The sale of tobacco in France is controlled by the State, and given to the widows and daughters of Government officials, military and naval officers, etc.

turned to the drawing-room on the arm of the old gentleman who had rendered such signal services to elementary instruction she found Maurice Cheiral, who had been detained at the ministry, and who, after dining at a restaurant, had returned home to dress, prior to spending the evening at a theatre.

He examined Madame Worms-Clavelin with interest, and sat down beside her on the comfortable old couch that stood under a great Sèvres dish decorated in neo-Chinese style, and suspended on the wall in a blue plush frame.

"Madame Clavelin! You are the very person I wanted to see!"

In her younger days Madame Worms-Clavelin had been thin and dark, and in such guise had not been unattractive to men. As time went on she became fat and fair, and in this guise she was again not unattractive to men.

"Did you see my uncle yesterday?"

"Yes. He was so sweet to me. How is he today?"

"Tired, very tired. He gave me the papers."

"What papers?"

"The papers referring to the candidatures for the six vacant sees. You are very anxious for Abbé Guitrel to be elected, are you not?"

"My husband is anxious. Your uncle told me that the thing was settled."

"My uncle; you should not take any notice of what he says—he is a Minister and cannot know. People are always fooling him, and then he often says what he does not mean. Why didn't you come to me?"

With charming modesty Madame Worms-Clavelin replied in a low voice:

"Well, I do come to you!"

"And you are wise to do so," replied the secretary-in-chief. "All the more so because the business is not going on as you wish, and it depends upon me whether it proceeds or not. My uncle told you, no doubt, that he was going to present the six applications to the Pope?"

"Yes."

"Well, they have already been presented. I know that, for I sent them. I take a special interest in Church matters. My uncle is one of the old school; he does not understand the importance of religion, while I realise it thoroughly. Now this is how things stand: the six candidates have been presented to the Pope, and the Holy Father has only accepted four. As far as the other two are concerned, that is M. Guitrel and M. Morrue, he does not absolutely reject them, but he says he has not yet sufficient information concerning them." Maurice Cheiral shook his head gravely. "He has not sufficient information! And when he gets more I do

not know what he will say. Between ourselves, dear lady, Guitrel looks to me a bit of a rogue, and we cannot be too careful in choosing our bishops. The clergy is a force upon which a prudent Government should be able to rely; we are just beginning to realise that."

"You are quite right," said Madame Clavelin.

"On the other hand," went on the secretary-in-chief, "your candidate seems learned, well read, and open-minded."

"Well?" asked Madame Worms-Clavelin, with a delightful smile.

"It is difficult!" replied Cheiral.

Cheiral was not a very clever man. He took few things into consideration, and always acted on reasons so futile that they were difficult to unravel. And so it was thought, that, being still young, he was swayed by personal motives. At the present time he had just finished reading a book by M. Imbert de Saint-Amand on the Tuileries during the second Empire; the splendour of the brilliant court had particularly taken his fancy, and the book had fired him with the desire to live, like the Duc de Morny, a life in which politics should be combined with pleasure and power of every description. He looked at Madame Worms-Clavelin in a manner the significance of which she thoroughly comprehended as she sat there silent with lowered gaze.

"My uncle," went on Cheiral, "gives me a free hand in this matter, which does not interest him at all. I can set about it in two ways. I can propose without further delay the four candidates accepted by the Holy Father, or I can tell the Nuncio that things will remain at a standstill until the Holy See has approved of six candidates. I have not yet made up my mind, but should be delighted to talk the matter over with you. Shall I expect you to-morrow afternoon at five o'clock, and wait for you in a closed carriage at the end of the Rue Vigny by the gates of the Park Monceau?"

"There's not much risk in that," thought Madame Worms-Clavelin, her only reply a slight quivering of her downcast lids.

CHAPTER XVIII

MADAME DE BONMONT had no difficulty in bringing Raoul Marcien and M. l'Abbé Guitrel together at her house. The meeting was all that could be desired, for on his part M. l'Abbé Guitrel was full of unction, and Raoul, being a society man, knew what was due to the Church.

"Monsieur l'Abbé," he said, "I come of a family of priests and soldiers. I have been a soldier myself, and that means——"

"He did not finish his sentence, for M. Guitrel held out his hand with a smile, saying:

"We may call it the alliance of the sword and the aspersorium." Then immediately resuming his priestly gravity: "And that is the most natural and the best of all alliances. We priests are soldiers too, and as far as I am concerned I am very fond of the army."

Madame de Bonmont gazed with sympathetic eyes at the Abbé, who continued:

"In the diocese to which I belong we have started clubs, where the soldiers can read good books as they smoke their cigars. The work is under the

patronage of Monseigneur Charlot, and is both flourishing and useful. Let us not be unjust toward the age in which we live; if it contains much evil it also holds much that is good. We are engaged in a great fight, and that is, perhaps, to be preferred to the lukewarm state of those whom a great Christian poet has described as being shut out from both Heaven and Hell."

Raoul approved of this speech, but ventured no reply. He did not answer, by virtue of the fact that he had few ideas upon the subject, and also because his whole mind was absorbed in the thought of the three charges of cheating brought against him during the past week, which made it impossible for him to follow any abstract or general train of ideas.

Madame de Bonmont but dimly divined the real reason of his silence, and M. Guitrel did not understand it at all. With an honest desire to do the right thing, and keep the ball of conversation going, he asked M. Marcien if he knew Colonel Gandouin.

"He is an excellent man in every way," added the priest. "A fine example of the Christian and the soldier. He is respected by every right-thinking man in our diocese."

"Do I know Colonel Gandouin!" cried Raoul. "I know him only too well. I've had enough of him! I can't bear the man!"

This outburst grieved Madame de Bonmont and startled M. Guitrel. Neither of them knew that four years before Colonel Gandouin, with six other officers, had ordered Captain Marcien to be placed on half-pay for habitual dereliction of duty, that offence, selected from many others, being the reason assigned.

From this moment the gentle Elizabeth gave up hoping that any good would come of the interview which she had arranged to calm her Raoul, to turn him away from thoughts of violence and bring him back to thoughts of love. She opened her heart, however, and in a tearful voice said to the Abbé:

"Don't you think, M. l'Abbé, that when a man is young and has a fine future before him, he ought not to give way to discouragement and depression? Ought he not, on the contrary, to avoid all sad thoughts?"

"Certainly, Madame la Baronne, certainly," replied M. l'Abbé Guitrel. "We must never give way to discouragement, or abandon ourselves to grief without cause. A good Christian never encourages gloomy thoughts, Madame la Baronne, that is quite certain."

"Do you hear, M. Marcien?" asked Madame de Bonmont.

But Raoul did not hear, and so the conversation dropped. Then Madame de Bonmont, being a

kind-hearted woman, and anxious in the midst of her own worries to give a little pleasure to M. Guitrel, turned the topic of conversation.

"And so, M. l'Abbé," she said, "your favourite stone is the amethyst."

Guessing the drift of her remark, the priest answered severely and even harshly:

"Do not speak of that, Madame, I beg. Do not speak of that!"

CHAPTER XIX

AVING risen early one morning, M. Bergeret, Professor of Latin literature, went for a walk into the country with Riquet. The two loved each other dearly, and were nearly always together. They had the same tastes, and both preferred a quiet, uneventful, and simple life.

Riquet's eyes always followed his master closely on these walks. He was afraid to let him out of his sight one instant, because he was not very sharp-scented, and, had he lost his master, could not have tracked him again. His beautiful, loving look was very engaging as he trotted by the side of M. Bergeret with an important air quite pretty to see. The Professor of Latin literature walked slowly or quickly according to the trend of his capricious fancy.

As soon as Riquet was a stone's throw ahead of his master, he turned round and waited for him with his nose in the air, and one of his front paws lifted in an attitude of attention and watchfulness. It did not take much to amuse either of them.

Riquet plunged into gardens and shops alike, coming out again as hastily as he had entered. On this particular day he bounded into the coal-seller's office, to find himself confronted by a huge snow-white pigeon that flapped its wings in the darkness, to his extreme terror.

He came as usual to relate his adventure, with eyes and paws and tail, to M. Bergeret, who said jokingly:

"Yes, indeed, my poor Riquet, we have had a terrible encounter, and have escaped the claws and beak of a winged monster. That pigeon was an awe-inspiring creature!"

And M. Bergeret smiled. Riquet knew that smile, and knew that his master was making fun of him. This was a thing he could not bear. He stopped wagging his tail, and walked with hanging head, hunched-up back, and legs wide apart, as a sign of annoyance.

"My poor Riquet," said M. Bergeret to him again, "that bird, which your ancestors would have eaten alive, alarms you. You are not hungry, as they would have been, and you are not as brave as they were; the refinement of culture has made a coward of you. It is questionable whether civilisation does not tend to make men less courageous as well as less fierce. But civilised man, out of respect for his species, affects courage and makes of it an

artificial virtue far more beautiful than the natural one. While, as for you, you shamelessly display your fear."

Riquet's annoyance, to tell the truth, was but slight, and only lasted a few minutes. All was forgiven and forgotten when the man and the dog entred the Josde woods just at the hour when the grass is wet with dew and light mists rise from the hills.

M. Bergeret loved the woods, and at sight of a blade of grass would lose himself in boundless reveries. Riquet, too, loved the woods. As he sniffed at the dead leaves his soul was filled with strange delight. In deep meditation, therefore, they followed the pathway leading to the Carrefour des Demoiselles, when they met a horseman returning to the town. It was M. de Terremondre, the county councillor.

"Good day, M. Bergeret," he cried, reining in his horse. "Well! Have you thought over my arguments of yesterday?"

He had explained the evening before at Paillot's the reason why he was against the Jews.

When in the country, especially during the hunting season, M. de Terremondre's proclivities were anti-Jewish. When in Paris he dined with rich Jews, whom he tolerated to the extent of inducing them to buy pictures at a profit to himself. At County Council meetings, with due consideration to the

feelings that were paramount in his county town, he was a Nationalist and an Anti-Semite. But as there were no Jews in that town the anti-Jewish crusade consisted principally in attacks upon the Protestants, who formed a small, austere, and exclusive community of their own.

"So we are enemies," went on M. de Terremondre. "I am sorry for that, because you are a clever man, but you live quite outside the social movement, and are not mixed up in public life. If you did as I do, and entered into it, your sympathies would be anti-Jewish."

"You flatter me," said M. Bergeret. "The Jewish race which peopled Chaldea, Assyria, and Phœnicia in former times, and which founded cities all along the Mediterranean coast, is composed today of Jews scattered the world over, and also of the countless Arab populations of Asia and Africa. My heart is not great enough to contain so many hatreds. Old Cadmus was a Jew, but I really couldn't be the enemy of old Cadmus!"

"You are joking," replied M. de Terremondre, holding in his horse, who was nibbling at the bushes. "You know as well as I do that the anti-Jewish movement is directed solely against the Jews who have settled in France."

"Therefore I must hate 80,000 persons," said

M. Bergeret. "That is still too many; I have not the strength for it!"

"No one asks you to hate them," said M. de Terremondre. "But Jews and Frenchmen cannot live together. The antagonism is ineradicable, it is in the blood."

"I believe, on the contrary," said M. Bergeret, "that the Jews are particularly assimilable, and have the most plastic and malleable natures in the world. With the same readiness that the niece of Mardocheus entered the harem of Ahasuerus in bygone days, so the daughters of our Jewish financiers marry nowadays the heirs to the greatest names in Christian France. After marriages such as these it is rather late in the day to speak of incompatibility of race. Then, I think it is a bad thing to make a distinction of race in any country; it is not the race that makes the nation, and there is not a single country in Europe that has not been founded on a multitude of mixed and different races. When Cæsar entered Gaul it was peopled by Celts, Gauls, Iberians, all differing in origin and religion. The tribes that set up the cromlechs were not of the same blood as those who honoured bards and druids. Into this human mixture the different invasions poured Germans, Romans, Saracens, and out of the whole a nation arose, the brave and lovable people of France, who, not so very long ago, were the

teachers of justice, liberty, and philosophy to the entire world. Think of the beautiful words of Renan; I wish I could remember them exactly: 'What makes a nation is the memory of the great things its people have done together, and the will they have to accomplish others.' "

"Excellent!" said M. de Terremondre. "But as I have not the will to accomplish great things with the Jews, I remain an Anti-Semite."

"Are you quite sure that it is possible for your feelings to be wholly anti-Jewish?" asked M. Bergeret.

"I do not understand you," replied M. de Terremondre.

"Then I will explain myself," said M. Bergeret. "There is one fact that never varies: each time there is an attack on the Jews, a goodly number of them side with the enemy. That is just what happened to Titus."

At this point in the conversation Riquet sat down in the middle of the road and looked resignedly at his master.

"You will agree," went on M. Bergeret, "that between the years 67 and 70 A.D. Titus was a strong Anti-Semite. He took Jotapate, and exterminated its inhabitants. He conquered Jerusalem, burned the Temple, and reduced to ashes and ruins the city which afterwards received the name of Œlia

Capitolina. The seven-branched candlestick was carried in his triumphal procession to Rome, and, I think, without doing you an injustice, I may say that that was Anti-Semitism carried to a degree which you people can never hope to attain. Well! Titus, the destroyer of Jerusalem, had many friends among the Jews. Berenice was deeply attached to him, and you know as well as I do that it was against his will and against hers that he left her. Flavius Josephus was his friend, and Flavius was not one of the least of his nation. He was descended from the Asmonean kings, lived the life of a strict Pharisee, and wrote Greek correctly enough. After the demolition of the temple and holy city he followed Titus to Rome, and became the intimate friend of the Emperor. He received the freedom of the city, the title of Roman Knight, and a pension. And do not imagine, monsieur, that in so doing he was betraying his race. On the contrary, he remained faithful to the law, and applied himself to the collection of national antiquities. In short, he was a good Jew in his own way and a friend of Titus. Now there have always been men like Flavius in Israel. As you pointed out, I live a secluded life and know nothing of what goes on in the world, but it would be a great surprise to me if at the present crisis the Jews were not divided amongst themselves,

and if a great number of them were not on your side."

"Some of them are with us, as you say," replied M. de Terremondre. "All the more credit to them."

"I thought as much," said M. Bergeret. "And what is more, I am sure that there are some clever ones among them who will make their mark in this crusade against themselves. About thirty years ago a senator, a very clever man, who admired the Jewish faculty for getting on, and who cited as an example a certain court chaplain of Jewish origin, used the following words, which have since been much quoted. 'See,' said he, 'here is a Jew who has gone into the Church, and now he is a Monseigneur. Let us not revive the prejudices of barbaric times. Let us not ask if a man is a Jew or Christian, but only if he is an honest man and capable of serving his country.' "

M. de Terremondre's horse began to plunge, and Riquet, coming up to his master, begged him, with gentle, loving look, to continue the interrupted walk.

"Do not run away with the idea," went on M. de Terremondre, "that I include all Jews in the same blind feeling of dislike. I have many excellent friends among them, but my love for my country makes an Anti-Semite of me."

He held out his hand to M. Bergeret, and turned

his horse around. He was quietly proceeding on his way when the professor called him back.

"Hi! A word in your ear, dear M. de Terremondre. Now that the die is cast, and that you and your friends have quarrelled with the Jews, be very careful that you owe them nothing, and give them back the God you have taken from them—for you have taken their God."

"Jehovah?" asked M. de Terremondre.

"Yes, Jehovah! If I were in your place, I would beware of Him. He was a Jew at heart, and who knows whether He has not always remained a Jew? Who knows whether at this moment He is not avenging His people? All that we have seen lately, the confessions that burst forth like thunderclaps, the plain speaking, the revelations proceeding from all parts, the assembly of red-robed judges which you were not able to hinder even when you seemed all-powerful, who can tell whether Jehovah has not dealt these crushing blows? They savour of His old biblical style, and I seem to recognise His handiwork."

M. de Terremondre's horse was already disappearing behind the bushes round the bend of the path, and Riquet trotted along contentedly through the grass.

"Beware!" repeated M. Bergeret. "Do not keep their God."

CHAPTER XX

ADAME WORMS-CLAVELIN came along through the rainy darkness, holding up her umbrella, and walking with the brisk, decided step which, for a wonder, had not grown heavy from long years spent in provincial towns. The door of the carriage that was waiting for her in front of the gates of the Park Monceau, opened a little, and then stood wide, and Madame Worms-Clavelin slipped calmly in and took a seat beside the young secretary, who immediately inquired as to her health.

"I am always well," she replied, adding, "What awful weather!"

Streams of rain were running down the carriage windows; the street noises were drowned in the damp air, and all that could be heard was the gentle drip of the raindrops.

When the carriage began to roll with a muffled sound over the paved road, she asked:

"Where are we going?"

"Where you like."

"I don't mind—Neuilly way, I should think."

Having given instructions to the driver, Maurice Cheiral turned to the *préfet's* wife and said:

"I have much pleasure in informing you that the appointment of Abbé Guitrel (Joachim) to the See of Tourcoing will be announced in to-morrow's *Officiel.* I do not want to boast, but I can assure you that it has not been a very easy matter to arrange. The Nuncio is great at procrastination. People of that description make use of a prodigious amount of inactivity—Well, anyhow, everything is settled."

"That's good," replied Madame Worms-Clavelin. "I am sure you have rendered a service to the progressive republican party, and that the Moderates will have every reason to be pleased with their new bishop."

"At any rate," went on Maurice Cheiral, "you are satisfied."

After a long silence he continued:

"Just think, I never slept all night. I was thinking of you, and longing to see you again."

The strange thing was that he was speaking the truth, and that the expectation of this rendezvous had excited him. But he spoke in a joking tone and drawling voice that made his words appear false, besides which he was wanting both in assurance and decision.

Madame Worms-Clavelin quite thought she

would leave the carriage as she had entered it. Assuming a serious and gentle expression, she said in a sympathetic tone:

"Thank you, dear M. Cheiral. Put me down here, if you please, and remember me to your mother."

And she held out her hand, a little, stumpy hand clad in an exceedingly dirty glove. But he held it tightly, becoming tender and insistent, full of desire and amour-propre.

"I am as muddy as a water spaniel," she remarked, just as he was about to find that out for himself.

While he adhered to his resolve, in spite of the obstacles of circumstances and environment, she showed the most perfect good taste and simplicity. With wonderful tact, she avoided all the unpleasantness arising from an over-prolonged resistance or a too rapid resignation. In like manner she avoided any remark that might reveal either ironical indifference or interested participation. She behaved perfectly. She had no feeling of dislike for the young statesman, who was so innocent at the very moment when he believed himself to be so wicked, and feelings of real regret came over her as she reflected that she might have been more careful in selecting her *lingerie* for the occasion; she never had been careful enough of that, but of late years

her carelessness had become somewhat excessive. Her greatest merit on this occasion was in keeping clear of all emphasis and exaggeration.

After a while, Maurice suddenly became quiet, indifferent, even a trifle bored. He talked of things quite foreign to their present situation, and peered through the blurred window-panes at the streets that looked as though the carriage were going along at the bottom of an aquarium; all that could be seen through the rain was the gas-jets, and here and there the glass jars in the windows of the chemists' shops.

"What awful rain!" sighed Madame Worms-Clavelin.

"The weather has been dreadful for the last week," said Maurice Cheiral, "simply rotten. Is it the same in your part of the country?"

"We get more rain in our department than in any other in France," replied Madame Worms-Clavelin with charming sweetness. "But there is never any mud on the broad, gravelled garden paths of the Préfecture. Then we country people wear clogs."

"Do you know," said Cheiral, "that I have never been to your town?"

"There are beautiful walks there," replied Madame Worms-Clavelin, "and the surroundings

are charming. Do come and see us. My husband would be delighted."

"Does your husband like living there?"

"Yes, he likes it because he has been successful there."

In her turn, she tried to see through the clouded panes and to pierce the thick darkness that was full of fugitive glimmers of light.

"Where are we?" she asked.

"Far away from everywhere, I should think," he replied eagerly. "Where would you like me to put you down?"

She asked him to stop at a station, and he did not attempt to disguise his anxiety to leave her.

"I must go to the Chambre," he said. "I do not know what they have been doing to-day."

"Ah, they were sitting to-day?"

"Yes," he replied, "but there was nothing of importance, I believe—an increase of tariff. But one never knows. I had better just look in."

They took leave of one another easily and amicably. As Madame Worms-Clavelin stepped into a fiacre in the Boulevard de Courcelles, near the fortifications, she heard the newsboys crying the evening papers, and holding them out to the passers-by as they hurried along. She caught sight of a heading in huge letters—"Fall of the Government."

Madame Worms-Clavelin stood for a moment looking at the men, and listening to the voices dying away in the rainy night. She reflected that, if Loyer were really going to send in his resignation to the President of the Republic, there would be in all probability no notice in to-morrow's *Officiel* of the new appointments in the Church. She reflected that her husband's decoration would not be included in the last will and testament of the Minister of the Interior, and that hence the half-hour she had spent in the blue-curtained fiacre was of no avail. She had no regret over what had happened, but did not like doing things to no purpose.

"Neuilly," she said to the driver, "Boulevard Bineau, the Convent of the Dames du Saint-Sang."

And she sat pensive and solitary, while the cries of the newsvendors filled her ears, and she tried to convince herself that the news was true. She would not buy a paper, however, partly out of mistrust and contempt for all newspaper matter, and partly because she was determined not to rob herself of so much as a half-penny. She reflected that if the Ministry really had fallen, just at the moment when she was being so prodigal of her favours, it was a striking example of the irony of things and the spite that hovers ceaselessly about us, like the very atmosphere we breathe. She asked herself whether Loyer's secretary-in-chief had not known the news

that was now being shouted abroad while he waited for her at the park gates. At this thought she grew scarlet, as though her chastity had been outraged and her faith betrayed, for if that were the case Maurice Cheiral had been making game of her, and that she could not endure. However, her sound common sense and wide experience soon came to her aid, assuring her that it was never safe to trust the newspapers. She thought of Abbé Guitrel without a qualm, and congratulated herself on having contributed in ever so small a degree to the elevation of the excellent priest to the See of the Blessed Saint Loup. She arranged a few little details of her toilet the while, so that she might present a good appearance in the parlour of the Dames du Saint-Sang who were charged with the education of her daughter.

The fog was paler and less dense in the deserted avenues, and the low, damp streets of Neuilly. Through the gentle rain, the strong, graceful outlines of the great bare trees were visible. Madame Worms-Clavelin caught a glimpse of some poplars, and they reminded her of the country which she loved more dearly every day.

She reached the barred doorway crowned with a stone shield bearing the glove in which Joseph of Arimathea received the sacred blood of the Saviour, and rang the bell. At her request, the portress sent

for Mademoiselle de Clavelin, and Madame Worms-Clavelin entered the bright parlour with its horsehair chairs. As she sat there before a picture of the Virgin extending her blessing-laden hands, the *préfet's* wife was filled with a strong, sweet feeling of religion. She was not wholly a Christian, because she had never been baptised. But her daughter had been baptised, and was being brought up in the Catholic faith. Together with the Republic, Madame Worms-Clavelin felt strong leanings towards a conventional piety, and with a sincere uplifting of the heart she saluted the kind, blue-veiled Virgin, to whom well-to-do ladies like herself poured out their troubles and necessities. She thanked Providence for all her blessings, as she sat before the picture of Mary, with her outstretched arms, and she thanked the Virgin with a mystical intensity that the Jewish religion had never been able to satisfy. She was full of gratitude to God, who had guided her from the miserable days of her childhood in Montmartre, when she had run about the greasy streets of the outer boulevards in her worn-out shoes, until the present time, when she mixed in the best society, belonged to the ruling classes, and had a share in the affairs that governed the country; and she thanked God that in all her negotiations—for life is difficult, and one often needs the help of others—

she had, at any rate, never had to come into contact with any but men of position in the world.

"Good evening, mother!"

Madame Worms-Clavelin drew her daughter under the lamp and examined her teeth; that was always her first care. Then she looked at her eyes, to see whether she was anæmic or not, saw that her back was straight and that she did not bite her nails. When satisfied on all these points, she inquired as to her work and her conduct. Her solicitude was full of sound common sense and much experience, and altogether she was an excellent mother.

When at last the bell rang for evening study, and it was time to say good-bye, Madame Worms-Clavelin drew from her pocket a box of chocolates. The box was crushed, broken, dilapidated, and as flat as a pancake.

Mademoiselle de Clavelin took it, saying with a laugh:

"Oh, mother! It looks as if it had been in the wars!"

"It is this dreadful weather!" said Madame Worms-Clavelin, with a shrug of her shoulders.

That evening after dinner at the boarding-house she found on the drawing-room table a well-known evening paper whose information she knew to be well authenticated. On reading it, she learned that the Government had not fallen, and was not

even in difficulties. It is true that it had been in the minority at the commencement of the sitting, but that was only on the order of the day, and it had immediately been followed by a majority of 105.

The news delighted her, and as she thought of her husband, she said to herself, "Lucien will be pleased to hear that Guitrel has been made bishop."

CHAPTER XXI

SK M. Guitrel to come in," said Loyer.

Seated at his desk, the Minister was hardly visible behind the heaps of paper piled upon it; he was a little spectacled old man, with a grey moustache, watery eyes, and a sniff—a cynical, cantankerous old fellow, but an honest man who, in spite of the power and honour that had fallen to his lot, still had the appearance and manner of a professor of the law. He took off his spectacles and wiped them, for he was curious to see the Abbé, the candidate to the episcopal dignity, who had been backed by so many brilliant society women.

Madame de Gromance, the pretty provincial, had been the first to call upon him at the end of December. She had told him, without beating about the bush, that he must appoint the Abbé Guitrel to the See of Tourcoing. The old Minister, who still loved the perfume that clings to a pretty woman, had kept the little hand of Madame de Gromance for a long time between his, stroking with his thumb the bare space between the glove and the

sleeve where over the blue veins the skin is softest. He had not gone further, however, because he was getting old, and everything was an effort to him, and also he was afraid of appearing ridiculous in her eyes, for he still had his share of vanity. His words alone savoured of impropriety, and, according to his invariable custom, he inquired for Madame de Gromance's "old Royalist," as he familiarly called her husband. His eyes had become tearful behind their bluish glasses, and his face had creased itself into a thousand little wrinkles at the excellence of the jest.

The idea that the "old Royalist" was a wronged husband filled the Minister of Justice and Public Worship with what really was inordinate glee. As he thought of it, he looked at Madame de Gromance with more curiosity, interest, and pleasure than was perhaps in the case justifiable, but from the ruins of his amorous nature he was building a series of mental amusements, the most intense of which was to gloat over the misfortune of M. de Gromance in the very presence of its voluptuous cause.

During the six months in which he had been Minister of the Interior in a former Radical Cabinet, he had received from Worms-Clavelin private and confidential notes, telling him all about the Gromance ménage, so that he knew all there was to know about Clotilde's lovers, and delighted in the knowl-

edge that they were numerous. He had received the beautiful petitioner with every kindness, promising to look into M. Guitrel's case, but committing himself no further, for he was a good Republican, and did not believe in subordinating affairs of state to a woman's caprice.

Then, too, the Baronne de Bonmont, who was reputed to have the most beautiful shoulders in Paris, had spoken in favour of Abbé Guitrel at the Élysée soirées. Finally, Madame Worms-Clavelin, the *préfet's* wife, a very charming woman, had whispered a word in his ear concerning the good Abbé.

Loyer was very curious to see the priest who had fluttered so many feminine hearts. He wondered whether he was about to behold one of the great sturdy becassocked fellows that of latter days the Church has thrown into public gatherings, sending them as far even as the Chamber of Deputies, one of those young, full-blooded, outspoken clerical tribunes of the people—headstrong and shrewd, with a power over simple men and women.

The Abbé Guitrel entered the study, his head upon one side, and holding his hat before him in his clasped hands. He was not unprepossessing, but his desire to please, and his respect for the powers that be, made his habitual carefully assumed priestly dignity less apparent than usual.

Loyer noticed his three chins and domed head, his portly form, his narrow shoulders, and his unctuousness. He was quite an old man too.

"What do the women want with him?" he thought.

The interview was trifling on either side; but, after questioning M. Guitrel on some points of ecclesiastical administration, Loyer gathered from the fat man's replies that his views were both sensible and fair.

He remembered that the Director of Public Worship, M. Mostart, was not against the nomination of Abbé Guitrel to the See of Tourcoing. Truth to tell, M. Mostart had not given him much information on the subject. Since there had been such a rapid succession of clerical and anti-clerical cabinets, the Director of Public Worship had not dabbled overmuch in the making of bishops; the matter had become too delicate of handling. He had a house at Joinville, and was fond of gardening and fishing. His dearest dream was to write a chatty history of the Bobino Theatre, which he had known in its palmy days. He was growing old, was a prudent man, and did not stick obstinately to his own opinion. The evening before he had said to Loyer, "I propose Abbé Guitrel, but there's nothing to choose between Abbé Guitrel and Abbé Lantaigne, it's six of one and half a dozen of the other!"

Those were the very words of the Director of Public Worship, but Loyer was himself an old doctor at law, and always able to make nice distinctions.

M. Guitrel seemed to him sensible enough, and not too fanatical.

"You are not ignorant of the fact, Monsieur l'Abbé," he said, "that the late Bishop of Tourcoing, M. Duclou, tended to become intolerant in the latter part of his life, and gave an unreasonable amount of work to the Council of State. What is your opinion on the subject?"

"Alas," replied the Abbé Guitrel, with a sigh, "it is quite true that in his declining years, as he neared the period of eternal blessedness, Monseigneur Duclou made some rather unfortunate declarations. The situation was a difficult one then, but things have greatly altered, and his successor will be able to labour quietly towards the establishment of peace. What he will have to aim at is real peace. The road to it is marked; he will have to enter upon it resolutely and follow it to the end. As a matter of fact, laws dealing with education and the Army do not give rise nowadays to any difficulties, and all that really remains is the question of the taxation of religious communities. This question, we must allow, is peculiarly important in a diocese like Tourcoing, which, if I may say so, is plastered with all kinds of religious institutions. I have studied it at

length, and, if you wish, can speak of the conclusions to which this study has led me."

"The clergy," said Loyer, "dislike parting with their money. That is the truth."

"Nobody likes it, Monsieur le Ministre," returned Abbé Guitrel, "and Your Excellency, such an adept in all that relates to finance, must realise that there is a way of shearing the ratepayer without making him complain. Why not use the same method with our poor monks, who are too good Frenchmen not to be good ratepayers? You must bear in mind, Monsieur le Ministre, that they are subject in the first case to the ordinary taxes that everybody pays."

"Naturally," put in Loyer.

"Secondly, to taxes on inalienable property."

"And do you complain of that?" inquired the Minister.

"Not at all," replied the Abbé. "I am merely enumerating them all—quick reckonings make long friends. Thirdly, to a tax of four per cent on the income accruing from lands, houses, furniture, and money; and, fourthly, they are liable to the increment duty, as established by the laws of the 28th of December, 1880, and the 29th of December, 1884. It is only the principle underlying this last tax, as you know, Monsieur le Ministre, that has been contested by several communities. The agitation has

not yet died down everywhere, and it is on this point, Monsieur le Ministre, that I take the liberty of expressing the views which would actuate me, were I to have the honour of occupying the see of the Blessed Saint Loup."

As a sign of attention, the Minister turned round in his chair, and faced the Abbé, who went on in the following terms:

"As a matter of principle, Monsieur le Ministre, I disapprove of the spirit of revolt, and dislike any tumultuous or systematic claiming of rights, and in this I only comply with the Encyclical beginning *'Diuturnum illud,'* in which Leo XIII, following the example of St. Paul, exhorts his people to obedience towards the civil authorities. So much for principle; let us now look fact in the face. As a matter of fact, I find that the religious in the diocese of Tourcoing are placed in such different positions with regard to rates and taxes that universality of action is thereby rendered exceedingly difficult. In this diocese there are authorised and unauthorised communities, some communities dedicated to works of charity among the poor, the aged, and the orphan, and some whose sole aim and object is a life of spiritual contemplation. They are taxed differently, according to their different purposes. It is my opinion that the very opposition of their interests breaks down resistance, unless their bishop himself

directs the tenor of their claims, a thing which, for my part, I should avoid, if I were their spiritual head. I would willingly see uncertainty and division among the communities of my diocese if by so doing I could ensure the peace of the Church as a whole. As far as my secular clergy were concerned," added the priest in a firm voice, "I would answer for them as a general answers for his troops."

Having thus spoken, M. Guitrel apologised for having given such free vent to his thoughts, and wasted the precious time of His Excellency.

Old Loyer made no answer, but he nodded approval. For a parson, Guitrel was not so difficult to get on with after all, he thought.

CHAPTER XXII

MADAME DE BONMONT dismissed her carriage, and, hailing a cab, drove to the street where, amid the rumble of drays and the whistle of engines, she carried on her love affair. She would have preferred to see her Rara in a region adorned with gardens, but love is sometimes shy under the myrtles or by the murmuring fountains. Madame de Bonmont's thoughts were sad as she drove along the streets where the lamps were just beginning to glimmer through the misty evening light. Guitrel had indeed been appointed Bishop of Tourcoing, and she rejoiced thereat, but joy did not possess her soul completely. Rara, with his black humour and ferocious desires, worried her terribly. Now she went in fear and trembling to the rendezvous, to which in former times she had so eagerly looked forward. Confiding and retiring by nature, she dreaded, on his account as well as her own, anything in the nature of danger, catastrophe, or scandal. Her lover's mental attitude, which had never been satisfactory, had quite suddenly grown worse. Since the suicide of Colonel Henry he had

become dreadful to look upon. The bitterness in his blood had acted like vitriol upon his countenance, as it were searing his forehead, his eyelids, his cheeks, with marks of fire and brimstone. For the last fortnight mysterious causes had kept her dear one absent from the flat which he rented opposite the Moulin-Rouge, and which was his legal domicile. He had his letters forwarded to him, and received visitors in the little suite which Madame de Bonmont had taken for quite a different use.

Slowly and sadly she went up the stairs, but even on the very threshold of the door the hope of finding the delightful Rara of former days stirred her heart. Alas, her hope was vain, she was greeted with bitter words:

"What do you come here for? You despise me like all the rest."

She protested at such cruelty.

She did not despise him—on the contrary, her loving animal nature led her to admire him. She put her painted, yet youthful, lips to her lover's mouth, and kissed him sobbingly; but, pushing her away, he began to pace furiously up and down the two blue-tapestried rooms.

Noiselessly she untied the little parcel of cakes she had brought with her, and said in a hopeless, toneless voice:

"Will you have a *baba?* It is kirsch, just as you

like them," and she handed him the cake between two dainty sugary fingers. But he refused to see or hear her, and continued his fierce, monotonous promenade.

Then, with tear-dimmed eyes and bosom that heaved with sighs, she lifted the thick black veil which, mask-like, covered the upper part of her face, and silently commenced to eat a chocolate *éclair*.

At last, however, not knowing what to do or to say, she took a jewel-case from her pocket, and, opening it, displayed for Rara the bishop's ring which it contained, saying in a timid voice:

"Look at M. Guitrel's ring. It is a pretty stone, isn't it? It is an Hungarian amethyst. Do you think M. Guitrel will like it?"

"I don't care a damn!"

She put the case down on the toilet table in despair, while he, resuming the usual current of his thoughts, growled out:

"There's no mistake about it! I will do for one of them!"

She looked at him doubtfully, for she had noticed that he was always threatening to kill everybody, and that he killed no one. He divined her hidden thought. It was dreadful.

"I knew that you despised me too," he said.

He nearly struck her, and she wept bitterly;

eventually he calmed down, however, and drew her a terrible picture of his financial embarrassments.

She wept at the picture, but did not promise to give him much, because it was against her principles to give money to a lover, and, besides, she feared he might go away altogether if he had the means to do so.

When she left the little blue rooms she was so upset that she quite forgot the amethyst ring lying on the toilet table.

CHAPTER XXIII

RE you working, dear Master, do I disturb you?" asked M. Goubin, entering M. Bergeret's study.

"Not at all," replied the professor. "I was amusing myself by translating a Greek text of the Alexandrine period, discovered in a tomb at Philæ."

"I should be very glad if you would read me your translation, dear Master," said M. Goubin.

"With pleasure," replied M. Bergeret, and he began:

Concerning Hercules Atimos.

Deeds are commonly ascribed to the one and only Hercules which in reality have been accomplished by other heroes bearing the same name. That which Orpheus teaches us concerning the Thracian Hercules relates to the god rather than to the hero. I will not dwell upon this. The Tyrians tell of another Hercules to whom they attribute labours so prodigious that they are difficult to accept. What is less known is that Alcmena gave birth to twins who were exactly alike, and who each received the name

of Hercules. The one was the son of Jupiter and the other of Amphitryon. On account of his great deeds, the former attained the right to drink from the cup of Hebe at the table of the gods, and we look upon him as a god. The second was unworthy, that is why he was called Hercules Atimos.

What I know of him I have learned from an inhabitant of Eleuis, a wise and prudent man who has collected together many ancient legends. This is what he told me:

Hercules Atimos, the son of Amphitryon, when nearing manhood, received from his father a bow and arrows, forged by Vulcan, which dealt certain death to any creature whom they struck.

Now one day, when shooting wild cranes on the slopes of Cithæron, he met a herdsman who addressed him thus:

"Son of Amphitryon, there is an evil man who daily steals some of our cattle. Thou art full of youth and vigour. If thou canst find the thief and strike him with one of thy magic arrows, thou wilt gain great praise. But he is not easy of approach, for his feet are larger than the feet of other men, and he is very fleet."

Atimos promised the herdsman that he would punish the brigand, and went upon his way. Hiding in the mountain gorges, he saw at a distance the figure of a man who appeared to him evil. Thinking

it was the cattle-stealer, he killed him with his arrows. But while the man's blood was still fresh upon the wild anemones, Pallas Athene, the bright-eyed goddess, descended from Olympus, and came to meet Atimos, who did not recognise her, for she was disguised as an old servant of King Amphitryon. And the goddess spoke to him thus:

"Divine son of Amphitryon, the man thou hast killed was not a stealer of cattle, but a good man. The guilty man is easily recognised by the print of his feet in the dust, for they are larger than those of other men. The dead man's conduct was irreproachable, and his life a life of innocence. Therefore shalt thou pray with tears to the divine Apollo to restore him to life. Apollo will not refuse thy request if thou pleadest with outstretched supplicating hands."

Full of anger, however, Atimos replied:

"I have punished this man for his wickedness. Dost thou think, old man, that I know not what I do and strike at random? Peace! Get thee gone, thou madman, or thou shalt repent thy audacity."

Some young shepherds who were gambolling with their goats upon the slopes of Cithæron hearing the words of Atimos, received them with such shouts of praise that the mountain resounded and the ancient pine trees stirred and quivered. And Pallas Athene, the bright-eyed goddess, returned to snowy Olympus.

Atimos, however, had resumed his journey, and soon found himself upon the tracks of the cattle-thief, whom he could see at a little distance ahead. He recognised him quite easily by his footprints in the sand, for they were much greater than those of other men.

Then thought the hero to himself, "It is necessary that men believe in the innocence of this man, so that they may believe I have slain the guilty one, and that my glory be made known among men."

With this thought in his mind, he called the man and said to him: "Friend, I honour thee because thou art good and thy thoughts just." Then, drawing from his quiver one of the arrows made by Vulcan, he gave it to the man with these words, "Take this arrow made by Vulcan. All those who see thee with it will honour thee, and thou wilt be judged worthy of the friendship of a hero."

Thus spoke he. The thief took the arrow and went away. And divine Athene, the bright-eyed goddess, descended from snowy Olympus. She disguised herself as a gentle shepherd, and, coming up to Atimos, said: "Son of Amphitryon, in absolving the guilty man thou hast killed the innocent a second time. And this action shall not bring thee glory among men."

But Atimos did not recognise the goddess, and believing her to be a shepherd, he cried in fury:

"Chicken-heart, vain babbler, dog, I will tear out thy soul!" And he lifted against Pallas Athene his bow, the wood of which was harder than the iron of the arrows forged by Vulcan.

"The rest is missing," said M. Bergeret, replacing the papers upon his table.

"What a pity!" said M. Goubin.

"It is a pity," said M. Bergeret. "I have been much interested in translating this Greek text; one must have a change sometimes from everyday affairs."

CHAPTER XXIV

AS evening fell, Madame de Bonmont with anxious heart hailed a cab and drove to Rara's rooms, for she wished to see him again and to recover the amethyst ring. But she feared some disaster. When the cab crossed the Pont de l'Europe and stopped in front of her lover's door she saw that the road was black with hats and coats. Something was going on that reminded her of a funeral or a removal. Men were heaping portfolios and piles of papers into a cab, others were bringing along a little box which Madame de Bonmont recognised as the old military trunk filled with stamped papers in which Rara had so often plunged his flushed arms and his furious, hairy visage.

As she stood there, frozen with terror, she heard the voice of the dishevelled *concierge* whisper in her ear:

"Don't come in. Be off as fast as you can! The police are here with the magistrate and the commissioner. They have seized your gentleman's papers and sealed up everything."

The cab carried away a prostrate Madame de

Bonmont. In the depths of despair at her lost love she was, however, conscious of this thought:

"And Monseigneur Guitrel's ring, which has been sealed with the rest!"

CHAPTER XXV

PEOPLE had been talking about it for three months. M. Bergeret learned that he had friends in Paris who had never seen him, and friends such as these are the surest; their actions are governed by sensible, masterly, positive reasons, and, if only their report is favourable, they are sure of a hearing. M. Bergeret's friends thought that his place was in Paris, and suggested bringing him there. M. Leterrier did all he could to bring this about, and at last it was arranged.

M. Bergeret was appointed Professor at the Sorbonne. As he left the house of M. le Doyen Torquet, who had apprised him in the most formal terms of his nomination, M. Bergeret, finding himself in the street again, looked at the slate roofs, the familiar free-stone walls, the shaving basin that swung gently to and fro over the door of the hairdresser, the sign of the red cow over the milkman's, and the little bronze Triton, with water streaming from his mouth, at the corner of the Faubourg de Josde; and all these familiar things appeared suddenly strange in his eyes. His feet had suddenly

become unacquainted with the pavements on which he had so long and so often gone his way, with feet rendered heavy by sadness or fatigue, or made light by some slight happiness or amusement. The town, with its towers and steeples standing up against the grey sky, looked to him like some strange, far-away dream city, rather the picture of a city than the reality. And the picture grew smaller and smaller. People, as well as things, seemed far-away and diminished in his eyes. The postman, two women, and the clerk of the court whom he met, looked, to him, like people on a cinematograph screen, absolutely unreal and belonging to quite another world than his.

After a few minutes of this strange feeling, he pulled himself up, for he was both thoughtful and quick to read his own motives, thus providing himself with an inexhaustible subject for surprise, sarcasm, and pity.

"Come now," he said to himself, "here is a town in which I have lived for fifteen years, and which suddenly becomes strange to me because I am about to leave it. More than that, it has, to a certain extent, already become unreal to me. Now that it is no longer my own town, it ceases to exist, and is nothing but a vain image. The reason is that the many interesting things it contains were only interesting in so far as they directly affected me. As soon

as they cease to do that, they practically do not exist as far as I am concerned. And thus, this populous city, situated on the hills that border a great river, this ancient Gaulish town, this colony where the Romans built temples and a circus; this strong city that went through three memorable sieges, where two councils were held, which was enriched with a basilica, the crypt of which is still in existence, a cathedral, a college, sixteen parish churches, plus sixty chapels, a town hall, markets, hospitals, and palaces; this town which in very ancient times formed a part of the royal domain, became the capital of a vast province, and still bears on the fronton of the governor's palace, now turned into barracks, the civic coat of farms surrounded by lions and the Virtues; this town which to-day contains an archbishop's palace, a Faculty of Letters, a Faculty of Science, a Court of Appeal, and a Court of Justice; the chief town of a rich department only existed in reference to myself. It was peopled by myself alone; I was the only cause of its existence. It is high time for me to go; the town is fading away. I never knew that my mind was subjective to such a mad extent. A man never knows himself, and is a monster without realising it."

Thus did M. Bergeret examine himself with praiseworthy sincerity. As he was passing the church of Saint-Exupère, however, he stopped under

the porch of the Last Judgment. He had always loved the old legendary sculptures, and taken an interest in the stories graven upon the stone. One devil in particular, who had a dog's head on his shoulders, and a man's face on the nether portion of his anatomy, had a peculiar fascination for him. He was occupied in dragging a long file of damned souls chained together, and his two countenances expressed absolute contentment. There was also a little monk whom an angel was trying to draw up by his hands, while a devil dragged him down by the feet. M. Bergeret loved that one, but he had never before looked with so much interest at these objects which he was now on the point of leaving.

He could not take his eyes away from them. The naïve idea of the universe expressed in stone by men who had been dead for more than five hundred years touched him, and seemed to him lovable in its absurdity. He regretted never having studied it more closely or examined it more sympathetically. He remembered that this porch of the Last Judgment which he had seen gilded by the rays of the sun and whitened by the moonbeams, in the joyous summer time and the dark winter days, would be with him only a little longer, and then he would see it no more.

He realised then that he was attached to things by invisible links not to be broken asunder

without pain, and his heart was suddenly filled with great veneration for his town. He loved her old walls and her old trees. He went out of his way to go up the Mall and look at a favourite elm that grew there, the one he always sat beneath at the close of the long summer days. The beautiful tree was now bare of foliage, and its strong, slender framework stood out naked and black against the sky. M. Bergeret gazed at it long. The tranquil giant was motionless and silent, and the mystery of its peaceful life gave rise to deep meditation on the part of the man who was about to enter upon a new phase of his destiny.

It was thus M. Bergeret learned that he loved his mother soil and the town where he had suffered tribulation and tasted quiet happiness.

CHAPTER XXVI

MONSEIGNEUR GUITREL, Bishop of Tourcoing, addressed to the President of the Republic the following letter, the text of which was published *in extenso* by the *Semaine religieuse,* the *Vérité,* the *Étendard,* the *Études sérieuses,* and several other diocesan papers:

"Monsieur le President,

"Before bringing to your notice several just causes for complaint and divers claims which are only too well founded, allow me for one short instant to enjoy the keen delight of feeling that I am in perfect accord with you on a point which must affect us both; allow me, realising as I do the feelings that must have swayed you during these long days of trial and of consolation, to join with you in an outburst of patriotic gratitude. Oh, how your generous soul must have suffered when you saw that handful of misguided men cast insult at the Army under the pretext of defending justice and truth, as though justice and truth could exist in opposition to social order and the hierarchy of power estab-

lished by God Himself upon this earth! And how that heart of yours must have rejoiced at the sight of the whole nation, without exception of party, rising as one man to acclaim our brave Army, the Army of Clovis, Charlemagne, and St. Louis, of Godefroy de Bouillon, Jeanne d'Arc and Bayard; to embrace her cause and avenge her wrongs. Oh, with what satisfaction must you have witnessed the watchful wisdom of the nation as it frustrated the devices of the proud and the evil-doer!

"Certainly one cannot deny that the honour of such praiseworthy conduct is due to France as a whole. But you are too clear-sighted, M. le Président, not to have recognised the Church and her faithful members in the van of the supporters of law and authority. They were in the front rank of the battle, saluting with confidence and respect the Army and her chiefs. And was it not the right place for the servants of Him Who has called Himself the God of Armies, and Who, to use the words of Bossuet, has sanctified them in calling Himself by that name? Thus you will always find in us the surest upholders of law and order, and the obedience which we have not refused even to princes that persecuted us will never tire. In return for this may your Government ever look peacefully upon us, and so make our obedience a joy! Our hearts must exult at sight of the warlike array which makes us feared

by other nations, and at sight of you yourself in your place of honour, surrounded by your brilliant staff, like King Saul, that great and courageous man who always attached the bravest warriors to his person. *Nam quemcumque viderat Saul virum fortem et aptum ad prælium, sociabat eum sibi* (1 Kings xiv. 52).

"Oh, would that I could end this letter as I have commenced it, with words of joy and gladness, and how happy should I be, M. le Président, if I could associate your venerated name with the declaration of peace in the Church as I have associated it with the victories gained before our eyes by the spirit of authority over the spirit of discord. But, alas, it cannot be! I must bring to your notice a subject of great sorrow; must afflict your soul by the spectacle of a great grief. I shall accomplish an irresistible duty in bringing your mind to bear upon an open and bleeding wound which must be healed. It is to my interest to tell you certain painful truths, and to your interest to listen. My pastoral duty compels me to speak. Placed by the grace of the Sovereign Pontiff upon the See of the Blessed Saint Loup, successor as I am of so many holy apostles and vigilant pastors, should I be the legitimate heir of their devoted labours if I had not the courage to continue them? *Alii laboraverunt, et vos in labores eorum introistis* (Ecc. viii. 9). It is therefore fitting

that my feeble voice should uplift itself until it reach your ears. It is also fitting that you lend an attentive ear to my words, for the subject I am about to discuss is worthy the thought of a ruler. *Princeps vero ea, quæ digna sunt principe, cogitabit* (Is. xxxii.).

"But how can I broach the subject without immediately feeling myself overcome by overwhelming grief? How can I, without weeping, point out to you the state of the religious whose spiritual head I am? For it is of them I would speak, M. le Président. As I entered my diocese, how heart-rending were the sights that met my gaze on all sides. In the sacred buildings consecrated to the education of children, the cure of the sick, and the care of the aged, the instruction of our priests and the contemplation of the divine mysteries, I found nothing but anxious faces and sad looks. There, where the joy of innocence and the quietude of labour formerly reigned, a dark anxiety has settled. Sighs go up to heaven, and from all lips the same cry of anguish, 'Who will care for our sick and aged? What will become of our little children? Where shall we retire to pray?' These were the words that greeted the shepherd of the diocese of Tourcoing, such were the words of the monks and nuns who knelt at his feet and kissed his hands, for they have been robbed of that which is theirs by right, of that which is also

the right of our poor, our widows and orphans, the bread of our clergy, and the viaticum of our missionaries. Thus, at the moment of total ruin, our monks and nuns bewailed their fate while they waited for the tax-collectors to outrage the sanctuary of our cloistered virgins, and even to seize the sacred vessels on the altar.

"This, then, is the state to which our religious communities are reduced by the enforcement of the different taxation laws to which I have referred, if such mad and criminal enactments can be called laws. If you will but examine the position in which our religious orders are placed by these spoliative measures, dignified by the name of laws, the expressions of which I make use will not appear to you excessive, and a moment's attention on your part will make you share my feelings. Having regard to the fact that religious bodies are subject to the general taxation, it is iniquitous to force further taxes upon them; that will at once strike you as an injustice, and I can point out others equally unjust. But as regards this thing in particular, M. le Président, allow me to protest both firmly and respectfully. I have not sufficient authority to speak in the name of the entire Church, but I am sure that I do not stray from the right path when I declare as an essential principle of justice that the State has no right to impose burdens upon the Church. The

Church pays what is demanded of her, she pays as an act of grace, but she is under no obligation to do so. Her ancient exemption from taxation proceeded from her sovereignty, for the sovereign pays no tribute. She can always enter a claim to those ancient rights when and where it suits her convenience; she can no more renounce her just claims than she can renounce her duties and sovereign privileges, and, as matters are, she gives proof of the most admirable powers of renunciation. That is all. Having stated my objections, I will now proceed with my evidence.

"The religious bodies are subject to the following duties:

"Firstly, general taxation, as I have just stated.

"Secondly, taxes on inalienable property.

"Thirdly, a tax of four per cent on income (Acts of 1880 and 1884).

"Fourthly, liability under the 'droit d'accroissement,' the monstrous effects of which are supposed to have been modified by what is called the 'droit d'abonnement,' which the Government annually deducts from the estimated portion of deceased members the sum of eleven francs twenty-five per cent, including the decimes. It is true that, by a mock kindness which is in reality merely a refinement of perfidy and injustice, the law allows the charitable and educational institutions to be relieved of this

charge, on account of their utility, as though the houses where our holy women pray God to pardon the crimes of France and to enlighten her blinded rulers were not as useful, more useful even, than schools and hospitals!

"But it was necessary to disunite the common interests, and in order to do so differential treatment had to be meted out. The idea was to distintegrate and paralyse resistance; this again was the idea that actuated the Government when they fixed the tax of 30 per cent for recognised religious institutions, and at 40 per cent for the unrecognised, payable annually, on the value of property both real and personal, so that the latter, who are not permitted to hold property, are judged liable to pay, and to pay even more than the others.

"To sum up, for the further burden of our religious bodies to the common taxes are added the tax on inalienable property, the income tax of 4 per cent, and the so-called increment duties, which are not modified but accentuated by what is called the 'droit d'abonnement' or subscription duty. Is this endurable? Is it possible to find in the whole world another such abominable example of spoliation? No, you must admit, M. le Président, that it is not.

"And when the religious orders of my diocese asked me what they were to do, could I give them any other reply than the following: 'Resist the law!

It is your right and duty to oppose injustice! Resist the law! Say to them, "We cannot do it. *Non possumus.*" '

"They are resolved so to do, M. le Président, and all our religious bodies, recognised or unrecognised, teaching, charitable or cloistered, destined to foreign missions or to lives of monastic retreat, are agreed, in spite of the inequality with which they are assessed, upon a stubborn resistance. They have realised that the different forms of treatment meted out to them by your so-called laws are uniformly iniquitous, and that it behoves them to join together in a common defence. Their resolve is unshakable. After having paved the way to it, I support their resolution, and in so doing feel assured that I am not failing in the obedience I owe to authority and to the law, and which I whole-heartedly render to you both as a matter of conscience and religion. I feel sure that I am not misjudging your power, which can only be exercised for the maintenance of justice. *Ecce in justitia regnabit rex* (Paralip. xxii. 22).

"In his pastoral letter *Diuturnum illud* His Holiness Leo XIII has expressly declared that the faithful may dispense with obedience to civil power if the latter issue orders that openly disregard natural and divine rights. 'If a man,' he has said in this admirable letter, 'finds himself forced to infringe

either the law of God or the law of man, he should follow the precepts of Jesus Christ, and reply like the apostles, "It is better to obey God than man." To act thus is not to merit the reproach of disobedience, for as soon as the will of a ruler is in opposition to the will and law of God he exceeds his power, justice is corrupted, and henceforth his authority is impotent because, in so far as it is unjust, it ceases to exist.'

"Believe me it is not without deep and protracted meditation that I have encouraged the religious bodies under my control to make the necessary resistance. I have weighed the temporal loss that may, perhaps, result, and such consideration has not stopped me. When we reply to your tax-gatherers, '*Non possumus,*' you will attempt to overcome our resistance by force. But how will you achieve your end? Will you lay hands upon our recognised bodies? Dare you? Upon our non-recognised bodies? Can you? Will you show a pitiful courage and sell our goods and the objects dedicated to divine worship? And if it is indeed true that neither the poverty of the former nor the sacred nature of the latter will preserve them from your rapacity, you must learn, and the wives and children of those who aid and abet you must learn, that those who enter upon such a course run the risk of excommunication, the terrible effects of which strike fear

into even the most hardened sinners. And all those who consent to buy anything proceeding from any such unlawful sale expose themselves to the same penalty.

"And if we are robbed of our belongings, hunted from our dwellings, the injury will not be to us, but to you, who will be covered with the shame of unprecedented scandal. You can retaliate most cruelly upon us, but no threat can frighten us; we fear neither prisons nor chains. The manacled hands of priests and confessors have delivered the Church ere now. Come what may, we shall pay nothing, we may not, we cannot. *Non possumus.*

"Before arriving at such an extremity I thought it only right, M. le Président, to place the matter before you, in the hope that you would inquire into it with the whole-hearted firmness God bestows upon the rulers who place their trust in Him. May you, with His help, find a remedy for the crying evils I have placed before you. God grant, M. le Président, God grant that, when you have examined the injustice of the taxation as regards our religious bodies, you may be guided less by your counsellors than by your own sense of justice. For, if the chief may take counsel of others, it is his own counsel he should follow. As Solomon has said, 'Counsel in the heart of a man is like unto deep water.' *Sicut*

aqua profunda, sic consilium in corde viri (Prov. xx. 5).

"With the deepest respect, etc., I have the honour, M. le Président, to be

Your obedient servant,

"JOACHIM,

"Bishop of Tourcoing."

The letter of the Bishop of Tourcoing was published on January 14th.

On the 30th of the same month the *Agence Hava* sent the following communication to the papers:

"The cabinet met yesterday at the Élysée. It was decided at the meeting that the Minister of Public Worship should apply to the Council d'État for a writ against Monseigneur Guitrel, Bishop of Tourcoing, in connexion with a letter addressed by him to the President of the Republic."

MONSIEUR BERGERET IN PARIS

BY ANATOLE FRANCE

A TRANSLATION
BY B. DRILLIEN

BOOKLOVERS' EDITION

NEW YORK: WM. H. WISE & CO.
MCMXXX

PRINTED IN U. S. A. BY
FERRIS PRINTING COMPANY
BINDING BY - VAN REES
BOOK BINDING CORPORATION

MONSIEUR BERGERET IN PARIS

MONSIEUR BERGERET IN PARIS

CHAPTER I

ONSIEUR BERGERET was seated at table taking his frugal evening meal. Riquet lay at his feet on a tapestry cushion. Riquet had a religious soul; he rendered divine honours to mankind. He regarded his master as very good and very great. But it was chiefly when he saw him at table that he realized the sovereign greatness and goodness of Monsieur Bergeret.

If, to Riquet, all things pertaining to food were precious and impressive, those pertaining to the food of man were sacred. He venerated the dining-room as a temple, the table as an altar. During meals he kept his place at his master's feet, in silence and immobility.

"It's a spring chicken," said old Angélique as she placed the dish upon the table.

"Good. Be kind enough to carve it, then," said

Monsieur Bergeret, who was a poor hand with weapons and quite hopeless as a carver.

"Willingly," said Angélique, "but carving isn't woman's work, it's the gentlemen who ought to carve poultry."

"I don't know how to carve."

"Monsieur ought to know."

This dialogue was by no means new. Angélique and her master exchanged similar remarks every time that game or poultry came to the table. It was not flippantly, it was certainly not to save herself trouble, that the old servant persisted in offering her master the carving-knife as a token of the respect which was due to him. In the peasant class from which she had sprung and also in the little middle-class households where she had been in service, it was a tradition that it was the master's duty to carve. The faithful old soul's respect for tradition was profound. She did not think it right that Monsieur Bergeret should fall short of it, that he should delegate to her the performance of so authoritative a function, that he should fail to carve at his own table, since he was not grand enough to employ a butler to do it for him, like the Brécés, the Bonmonts and other such folk in town or country. She knew the obligations which honour imposes on a citizen who dines at home,

and she never failed to impress them upon Monsieur Bergeret.

"The knife has just been sharpened; Monsieur can easily cut off a wing. It's not difficult to find the joint when the chicken is tender."

"Angélique, be so good as to carve this chicken."

Reluctantly she obeyed, and, slightly crestfallen, she carved the chicken on a corner of the sideboard. With regard to human food she had ideas which were more accurate but no less respectful than those of Riquet.

Meanwhile Monsieur Bergeret revolved within himself the reasons of the prejudice which had induced the worthy woman to believe that the right of wielding the carving-knife belonged to the master of the house alone. He did not look to find them in any gracious and kindly feeling on the man's part that he should reserve to himself a tedious and unattractive task. It is, as a matter of fact, to be observed that throughout the ages the more laborious and distasteful household tasks have, by the common consent of all nations, been assigned to women. On the contrary, he attributed the tradition cherished by old Angélique to the ancient idea that the flesh of animals, prepared for the sustenance of man, is a thing so precious that the master alone may and

should apportion and distribute it. And he called to mind the godlike swine-herd Eumæus receiving Ulysses in his pig-sty. He did not recognize him, but honoured him as a guest sent by Zeus:

"Eumæus rose to divide the portions among his guests, for he had an equitable mind. He made seven portions, whereof he dedicated one to the Nymphs and to Hermes, son of Maia, and of the rest he gave one portion to each of his table companions; but to honour his guest Ulysses he offered him the whole chine of the pig. And the subtle Ulysses rejoiced thereat and said to Eumæus: 'Eumæus, mayst thou remain for ever dear to our father Zeus for that thou hast honoured me, such as I am, by giving me the best portion!' "

Thus Monsieur Bergeret, when in the company of his old servant, daughter of Mother Earth, felt himself carried back to the days of antiquity.

"Will Monsieur help himself to a little more?"

But he had not, like the divine Ulysses and the kings of Homer, an heroic appetite; and, as he ate, he read his paper, which lay open upon the table. This was another habit of which the servant did not approve.

"Would you like a bit of chicken, Riquet?" asked Monsieur Bergeret. "It is very good."

Riquet made no reply. He never asked for food as long as he lay under the table. However good the dishes might smell he did not claim his share of them, and, what is more, he dared not touch anything that was offered him. He refused to eat in a human dining-room. Monsieur Bergeret, an affectionate and kindly man, would have liked to share his meals with his comrade. At first he had tried to smuggle down to him a few little scraps. He had spoken to him gently, but not without that arrogance which so often accompanies beneficence. He had said:

"Lazarus, receive the crumbs of the good rich man, since for you, at all events, I am the good rich man."

But Riquet had always refused. The majesty of the place over-awed him; and perhaps in his former condition he had received a lesson that taught him to respect the master's food.

One day Monsieur Bergeret had been more pressing than usual. For a long while he had held a delicious piece of meat under his friend's nose. Riquet had averted his head, and, emerging from beneath the table-cloth, had gazed at his master with his beautiful, humble eyes, full of gentleness and

reproach; eyes that said: "Master, wherefore dost thou tempt me?"

And with drooping tail and crouching legs he had dragged himself upon his belly as a sign of humility, and had gone dejectedly to the door, where he sat upon his haunches. He had remained there throughout the meal. And Monsieur Bergeret had marvelled at the saintly patience of his little black friend.

He knew, then, what Riquet's feelings were, and that is why he did not insist on this occasion. Moreover, he knew that Riquet, after the dinner at which he was a reverential spectator, would presently go to the kitchen and greedily devour his own mess under the kitchen sink, snuffling and blowing, entirely at his ease. His mind at rest on this point, he resumed the thread of his thoughts.

"The heroes," he reflected, "used to make a great business of eating and drinking. Homer does not forget to tell us that in the palace of the fair-haired Menelaus, Eteonteus, the son of Boëthus, was wont to carve the meats and distribute the portions. A king was worthy of praise when, at his table, every man received his due portion of the roasted ox. Menelaus knew the customs of his times. With the aid of her servants the white-armed Helen saw to the cooking and the great

Eteonteus carved the meats. The pride of so noble a function still shines upon the smooth faces of our butlers and *maîtres d'hôtel.* We are deep-rooted in the past. But I am not a hungry man: I am only a small eater, and Angélique Borniche, primitive woman that she is, makes that too a grievance against me. She would think far more of me had I the appetite of a son of Atreus or a Bourbon."

Monsieur Bergeret had just reached this stage in his reflections when Riquet got up from his cushion and ran barking to the door.

This action was remarkable because it was unusual. Riquet never left his cushion until his master rose from table. He had been barking for some moments when old Angélique, putting a bewildered face in at the door, announced that "those young ladies" had arrived.

Monsieur Bergeret understood her to allude to his sister Zoe and his daughter Pauline, whom he had not expected so soon. He knew that his sister Zoe was brusque and sudden in her actions. He rose from the table; but Riquet, at the sound of footsteps, which were now heard in the passage outside, uttered terrible cries of warning; his aboriginal caution, unconquered by a liberal education, leading him to believe that every stranger must of necessity be an enemy. He scented a

great danger, a hideous invasion of the dining-room, with the menace of ruin and desolation.

Pauline flung her arms around her father's neck. Napkin in hand, he kissed her, and then stood back to gaze at this young girl, a mysterious being, like all young girls, whom, after a year's absence, he hardly recognized. She was at once very near and almost a stranger to him. She was his by virtue of the obscure sources of life, but she eluded him in the dazzling energy of youth.

"How do you do, papa?"

Her very voice had changed; it was lower and less uneven.

"How you have grown, my child!"

He thought her pretty, with her dainty nose, intelligent eyes and quizzical mouth. But this feeling was at once marred by the reflection that there is little peace in this world of ours, and that young people, seeking for happiness, are entering upon a difficult and uncertain enterprise.

He gave Zoe a hasty kiss upon either cheek.

"You have not altered, Zoe, my dear. I did not expect you to-day, but I am very glad to see you both again."

Riquet could not understand why his master gave so warm a welcome to strange folk. Had he violently driven them forth, he could have understood. However, he was used to not understand-

ing all the ways of men. Suffering Monsieur Bergeret to do as he would, he continued to perform his duty, barking furiously to scare the evil-doers. Then, from the depths of his throat, he drew growls of hatred and anger; and a frightful contraction of his lips uncovered his white teeth. Backing away from his enemies, he hurled threats at them.

"Is that your dog, papa?"

"You were to have come on Saturday," remarked Monsieur Bergeret.

"Didn't you get my letter?" inquired Zoe.

"Yes," replied Monsieur Bergeret.

"No, I mean the other one."

"I received only one."

"One cannot hear oneself speak here!"

It is true that Riquet was barking at the top of his voice.

"Your sideboard is dusty," remarked Zoe, putting her muff on it. "Doesn't your servant ever do any dusting?"

Riquet could not bear any one to lay hold of the sideboard like that. Either he had conceived a special aversion for Mademoiselle Zoe or he judged her the more important of the two, for it was to her that he addressed his loudest barks and growls. When he saw her place a hand upon the receptacle in which the human nutriment was stored he barked

so shrilly that the glasses upon the table rang again. Mademoiselle Zoe, turning upon him suddenly, inquired ironically:

"Are you going to eat me up?"

Riquet fled in terror.

"Is your dog vicious, papa?"

"No, he is intelligent; he isn't vicious."

"I don't think he's particularly intelligent," said Zoe.

"Yes, he is," said Monsieur Bergeret. "He does not understand all our ideas; but we don't understand all his. No one can enter into the mind of another."

"You, Lucien, are no judge of persons," said Zoe.

Monsieur Bergeret turned to Pauline.

"Come, let me have a look at you. I can hardly recognise you."

A bright idea struck Riquet. He made up his mind to go to the kitchen, to the kindly Angélique, and to warn her, if possible, of the disturbance taking place in the dining-room. She was his last hope for the restoration of order and the expulsion of the intruders.

"What have you done with Father's portrait?" inquired Mademoiselle Zoe.

"Sit down and have something to eat," said

Monsieur Bergeret. "There is some chicken and various other things."

"Papa, is it really true that we are going to live in Paris?"

"Next month, my child. Are you glad?"

"Yes, but I should be just as happy in the country if I could have a garden."

She stopped eating her chicken and said:

"I do admire you, papa. I'm proud of you. You are a great man."

"That is what my little dog Riquet thinks too," replied Monsieur Bergeret.

CHAPTER II

NDER the supervision of Mademoiselle Zoe, the professor's furniture was packed and taken to the railway station.

During the days of the removal Riquet roamed sadly through the devastated rooms. He regarded Zoe and Pauline with suspicion, as their arrival had been closely followed by the complete upheaval of his formerly peaceful home. The tears of old Angélique, who wept all day long in her kitchen, increased his depression. His most cherished habits were set at naught; the strange, ill-clad, fierce and insulting men troubled his repose; they even went so far as to enter the kitchen and kick away his plate of food and bowl of fresh water. Chairs were taken from him as soon as he lay upon them, and carpets were abruptly dragged from beneath his persecuted body, so that in his own home he no longer knew where to lay his head.

To his honour be it said that at first he had sought to resist. When the water-tank was re-

moved he had barked furiously at the enemy, but no one heeded the alarm. No one gave him any encouragement; nay, he was, indeed, actually opposed. "Be quiet," rapped out Mademoiselle Zoe, and Pauline had added, "Riquet, you are perfectly absurd!"

Thenceforth he decided not to waste his time in giving warnings that fell on deaf ears or to labour unaided for the common good, and he grieved silently over the ruined house, and wandered from room to room vainly seeking a little peace. When the pantechnicon men entered the room in which he had taken refuge he would prudently hide beneath some table or sideboard which had not yet been taken away. But this precaution was more harmful than helpful to him, for presently the piece of furniture tottered above him, rose, and fell again, creaking ominously and threatening to crush him. With bristling coat and haggard features he took to his heels only to seek another place of refuge as precarious as the last.

But these material inconveniences, nay, these perils, were trifling matters in comparison with the pain that filled his heart. It was his *moral,* so to speak, that was most affected.

To him the articles of furniture were not inanimate objects but living and kindly beings, favourable *genii* whose departure was a presage of

dire misfortune. Dishes and frying-pans, saucepans and sugar-basins, all the divinities of the kitchen; arm-chairs, carpets, cushions, all the fetishes of the fireside, his Lares and his household gods, had disappeared. He did not believe that so great a disaster could ever be made good, and his little soul grieved over it to the very limit of its capacity. Happily, like the human soul, it was easily distracted and quick to forget its woes. During the lengthy absences of the thirsty removers, when old Angélique's broom stirred up the ancient dust upon the floor, Riquet scented the smell of mice, or watched a scurrying spider, and his fickle fancy was diverted awhile; but he soon relapsed into melancholy.

On the day of departure, seeing that matters were growing worse from hour to hour, he was utterly miserable. It seemed to him a peculiarly ominous thing that they should thrust the linen into dismal-looking chests. Pauline was packing her own boxes with joyful eagerness. He turned from her as though she were doing an evil thing, and huddled against the wall. "The worst has come," he thought. "This is the end of all things!"

Whether he believed that things ceased to exist when he saw them no longer, or whether he was only anxious to avoid a painful spectacle, he was careful not to look in Pauline's direction. As she

went to and fro she chanced to notice Riquet's attitude, and its melancholy struck her as comical. Laughing, she called him: "Here, Riquet, here!" But he would neither stir from his corner nor turn his head. He hadn't at that moment the heart to caress his young mistress, and a secret instinct, a kind of foreboding, warned him not to go too near to the gaping trunk. Pauline called him several times, and as he did not respond she went over to him and picked him up in her arms.

"How miserable we are!" she said. "How much to be pitied!"

Her tone was ironical; Riquet did not understand irony. He lay motionless and dejected in her arms, feigning to see nothing, to hear nothing.

"Look at me, Riquet!" she demanded. Three times she bade him look at her, but in vain. Then, simulating violent anger, she threw him into the trunk, crying, "In you go, stupid!" and banged the lid on him. At that moment her aunt called her, and she went out of the room, leaving Riquet in the trunk.

He felt exceedingly uneasy, for it never entered his head that Pauline had put him there for fun, and merely to tease him. Judging that his position was quite bad enough already, he endeavoured not to aggravate it by thoughtless behaviour. For

some moments, therefore, he remained motionless without even drawing a breath. Then, feeling that no fresh disaster threatened him, he thought he had better explore his gloomy prison. He pawed the petticoats and chemises upon which he had been so cruelly precipitated, seeking some outlet by which he might escape. He had been busy for two or three minutes when Monsieur Bergeret, who was getting ready to go out, called him:

"Riquet! Riquet! Here! we're going to the bookshop to say good-bye to Paillot! Here! Where are you?"

Monsieur Bergeret's voice comforted Riquet greatly. He replied to it by a desperate scratching at the wicker sides of the trunk.

"Where is the dog?" inquired Monsieur Bergeret of Pauline, who at that moment returned, carrying a pile of linen.

"In my trunk, papa."

'Why in the trunk?"

"Because I put him there."

Monsieur Bergeret went up to the trunk, and remarked:

"It was thus that the child Comatas, who played upon the flute as he kept his master's goats, was imprisoned in a chest, where he was fed on honey by the bees of the Muses. But not so with you, Riquet; you would have died of hunger in

this trunk, for you are not dear to the immortal Muses."

Having spoken, Monsieur Bergeret freed his little friend, who with wagging tail followed him as far as the hall. Then a thought appeared to strike him. He returned to Pauline's room, ran to her and jumped up against her skirt, and only when he had riotously embraced her as a sign of his adoration did he rejoin his master on the stairs. He would have felt that he was lacking in wisdom and piety had he failed to bestow these tokens of affection on a being whose power had plunged him into the depths of a trunk.

Monsieur Bergeret thought Paillot's shop a dismal, ugly place. Paillot and his assistant were busy "calling over" the list of goods supplied to the Communal School. This task prevented him from prolonging his farewell to the professor. He had never had very much to say for himself and as he grew older he was gradually losing the habit of speech. He was weary of selling books; he saw that it was all over with the trade and was longing for the time to come when he could give up his business and retire to his place in the country, where he always spent his Sundays.

As was his wont, Monsieur Bergeret made for the corner where the old books were kept and took down volume XXXVIII of *The World's Ex-*

plorers. The book opened as usual at pages 212 and 213, and once more he perused these uninspiring lines:

". . . towards a northerly passage. 'It was owing to this check,' said he, 'that we were able to revisit the Sandwich Islands and enrich our voyage by a discovery which, although the last, seems in many respects to be the most important which has yet been made by Europeans in the whole extent of the Pacific Ocean.' The happy anticipations which these words appeared to announce were, unhappily, not realized. . . ."

These lines, which he was reading for the hundredth time, and which reminded him of so many hours of his commonplace and laborious existence which was embellished, nevertheless, by the fruitful labours of the mind; these lines, for whose meaning he had never sought, filled him, on this occasion, with melancholy and discouragement, as though they contained a symbol of the emptiness of all human hopes, an expression of the universal void. He closed the book, which he had opened so often and was never to open again, and dejectedly left the shop.

In the Place Saint-Exupère he cast a last glance at the house of Queen Marguerite. The rays of the setting sun gleamed upon its historic beams, and in the violent contrast of light and shade the

escutcheon of Philippe Tricouillard proudly displayed the outlines of its gorgeous coat of arms, placed there as an eloquent example and a reproach to the barren city.

Having re-entered the empty house, Riquet pawed his master's legs, looking up at him with his beautiful sorrowing eyes, that said: "You, formerly so rich and powerful, have you, O master, become poor? Have you grown powerless? You suffer men clad in filthy rags to invade your study, your bedroom and your dining-room, to fall upon your furniture and drag it out of doors. They drag your deep arm-chair down the stairs, your chair and mine, in which we sat to rest every evening, and often in the morning, side by side. In the clutch of these ragged men I heard it groan, that chair which is so great a fetish and so benevolent a spirit. And you never resisted these invaders. If you have lost all the *genii* that used to fill your house, even to the little divinities, that you used to put on your feet every morning when you got out of bed, those slippers which I used to worry in my play, if you are poor and miserable, O my master, what will become of me?"

"Lucien, we have no time to lose," said Zoe. "The train goes at eight and we have had no dinner. Let us go and dine at the station."

"To-morrow you will be in Paris," said Monsieur Bergeret to Riquet. "Paris is a famous and a generous city. To be honest, however, I must point out that this generosity is not vouchsafed alike to all its inhabitants. On the contrary, it is confined to a very small number of its citizens. But a whole city, a whole nation resides in the few who think more forcefully and more justly than the rest. The others do not count. What we call the spirit of a race attains consciousness only in imperceptible minorities. Minds which are sufficiently free to rid themselves of vulgar terrors and discover for themselves the veiled truths are rare in any place!"

CHAPTER III

PON Monsieur Bergeret's arrival in Paris, with his daughter Pauline and his sister Zoe, he had lodged in a house which was soon to be pulled down, and which he began to like as soon as he knew that he could not remain in it. He was unaware of the fact that in any case he would have left it at the same time. Mademoiselle Bergeret had made up her mind as to that. She had taken these rooms only to give herself time to find better, and was opposed to the spending of any money upon the place.

It was a house in the Rue de Seine, a hundred years old at least. Never beautiful, it had grown uglier with age. The *porte cochère* opened humbly on a damp courtyard between a shoemaker's shop and a carrier's office. Monsieur Bergeret's rooms were on the second floor, and on the same floor lived a picture-restorer through whose open door glimpses could be caught of little unframed canvases set about an earthenware stove, landscapes, old portraits, and an amber-skinned woman asleep

in a dark wood under a green sky. The staircase was fairly well lighted. Cobwebs hung in the corners, and at the turns the wooden stairs were embellished with tiles. Stray lettuce-leaves, dropped from some housewife's string bag, were to be found there of a morning.

Such things had no charm for Monsieur Bergeret, but he could not help feeling sad at the thought that he would become oblivious of these things as he had of so many others which, though they were not of any value, had made up the course of his life.

Every day, when his work was done, he went house-hunting. He thought of living for preference on the left bank of the Seine, where his father had dwelt before him, where it seemed to him one breathed an atmosphere of quiet life and peaceful study. What made his search more difficult was the state of the roads, broken with deep trenches and covered with mounds of earth. There were also the impassable and eternally disfigured quays.

It will, of course, be remembered that, in the year 1899, the surface of Paris underwent a complete upheaval, either because the new conditions of life necessitated the execution of a great number of municipal undertakings, or because the approach of a huge international exhibition gave rise on every side to an exaggerated activity and a sudden ardour

of enterprise. Monsieur Bergeret was grieved to see the town upset, for he did not sufficiently understand the necessity of such a proceeding, but, as he was a wise man, he endeavoured to console himself, to reassure himself by meditation. When he passed along his beautiful Quai Malaquais, so cruelly ravaged by merciless engineers, he pitied the uprooted trees and the banished keepers of book-stalls, and he reflected, not without a certain depth of feeling:

"I have lost my friends, and now all that gave me delight in this city, her peace, her grace and her beauty, her old-time elegance and her noble historical vistas, is being violently swept away. It is always right and fitting, however, that reason should prevail over sentiment. We must not dally with vain regrets for the past, nor commiserate with ourselves over the changes that thrust themselves upon us, since change is the very condition of life. Perhaps these upheavals are necessary; it is needful that this city should lose some of her traditional beauty, so that the lives of the greater number of her inhabitants may become less painful and less hard."

And, in the company of idle errand-boys and indolent police-sergeants, Monsieur Bergeret would watch the navvies digging deep into the soil of the famous quay, and once again he would tell himself:

"Here I see a vision of the city of the future, whose noblest buildings are as yet indicated only by deep excavations, which would suggest, to a shallow mind, that the labourers who are toiling to rear the city which we shall never behold are merely excavating abysmal pits, when in reality they may be laying the foundations of a prosperous home, the abode of joy and peace."

Thus did Monsieur Bergeret, who was a man of goodwill, look with a favouring eye upon the building of the ideal city; but he was much less at home amid the building operations of the real city, seeing that at every step he risked falling, through absence of mind, into a pit.

Nevertheless he continued to go house-hunting, but he did so in a whimsical fashion. Old houses pleased him, in that their stones had for him a tongue. The Rue Gît-le-Cœur had a particular attraction for him, and whenever he saw beside the keystone of a gateway or on a door which had once been flanked by a wrought-iron railing a notice to the effect that there was a flat to let, he would mount the stairs, accompanied by a sordid concierge, in an atmosphere that reeked of countless generations of rats, which was aggravated from floor to floor by the smell of cooking from poverty-stricken kitchens. The workshops of bookbinders or box-makers enriched it at times with the horrible odour

of sour glue, and Monsieur Bergeret would depart filled with sadness and discouragement.

Home again, he would tell his sister and daughter, at the dinner-table, of the unfavourable results of his inquiries; Mademoiselle Zoe would listen calmly to his story. She had made up her mind to seek and to find a house herself. She regarded her brother as a superior person, but as one quite incapable of reasonable ideas concerning the practical affairs of life.

"I went over a flat to-day on the Quai Conti. I don't know what you would think of it. It looks out on a courtyard with a well, some ivy, and a statue of Flora, moss-grown, mutilated, and headless, perpetually weaving a garland of flowers. I also saw a small flat in the Rue de la Chaise. That looks out on a garden with a great lime-tree, one branch of which, when the leaves have grown, would enter my study. There is a big room that Pauline could have; she would make it charming with a few yards of coloured cretonne."

"What about my room?" demanded Mademoiselle Zoe. "You never think of my room. Besides——"

She did not finish her sentence, as she took no particular notice of her brother's reports.

"We may be obliged to move into a new house," said Monsieur Bergeret, for he was a sensible

man accustomed to subject his desires to reason.

"I'm afraid so, papa," said Pauline. "But never mind, we will find you a tree reaching up to your window, I promise you."

She followed her father's investigations with perfect good nature, but without much personal interest, as a young girl undismayed by change, who vaguely feels that her fate is not yet determined, and lives the while in a species of anticipation.

"The new houses are better fitted up than the old ones," continued Monsieur Bergeret, "but I do not like them, perhaps because I am more conscious, in the midst of a luxury that one can measure, of the vulgarity of a straitened life. Not that the mediocrity of my fortune distresses me, even on your account. It is the banal and commonplace that I detest. . . . But you will think me absurd."

"Oh, no, papa."

"What I dislike in new houses is the precise sameness of their arrangement. The structure of the apartment is only too visible from the outside. For a long while dwellers in cities have been accustomed to live one above another, and as your aunt won't hear of a small house in the suburbs I am quite willing to put up with a third or fourth-story flat, and that is precisely why I cannot but regret giving up the idea of an old house. The irregu-

larity of old houses makes the piling of flat upon flat more endurable. When I walk down a new street I find myself thinking that this superposition of households in modern buildings is, in its uniformity, ridiculous. The small dining-rooms perched one above the other with the same little windows and the self-same copper gaselier lighted every evening at exactly the same time; the same tiny kitchens with larders looking on the yard, the same extremely dirty maidservants; the same drawing-rooms, with their pianos one over the other. To my mind, the precision of modern houses reveals the daily functions of the creatures enclosed in them as plainly as though the floors and ceilings were of glass. And all these people who dine one above another, play the piano one above another, and go to bed one above another, in a perfectly symmetrical fashion—when one thinks of it, they offer a spectacle both comical and humiliating."

"The tenants themselves would hardly think so," said Mademoiselle Zoe, who had quite decided to settle in a new house.

"It is true," said Pauline thoughtfully, "it is true, it is comical."

"Of course, here and there, I see rooms that I like," continued Monsieur Bergeret. "But the rent is always too high. And that makes me doubt the

truth of a principle laid down by the admirable Fourier, which assures us that our tastes are so diverse that if only we lived in harmony with one another hovels would be as much in demand as palaces. It is quite true that we do not live in harmony; or we should all possess prehensile tails, so that we could hang suspended from the trees. Fourier has expressly said so. Another man of equal merit, the gentle Prince Kropotkin, has assured us more recently that some day we shall live rent-free in the mansions on the great avenues, for their owners will abandon them when they can no longer procure servants to keep them up. In those days, says the benevolent prince, they will be delighted to hand them over to the worthy women of the working-classes who will not object to a kitchen in the basement. In the meanwhile, the question of a house is both arduous and difficult. Zoe, please come with me to see that suite of rooms on the Quai Conti of which I told you. It is rather dilapidated, having served for thirty years as a chemical warehouse. The landlord won't do any repairs as he expects to let the place as a warehouse. The windows are oval dormer-windows, but from them you see an ivy-covered wall, a moss-grown well and a headless statue of Flora which still seems to smile. Such things are not easily found in Paris."

CHAPTER IV

T is to let," said Mademoiselle Zoe, as they stopped before the gate. "It is to let, but we will not take it. It is too big. Besides——"

"No, we will not take it, but will you look over it? I should be interested to see it again," said Monsieur Bergeret timidly.

They hesitated a moment. It seemed to them that in entering the deep dark vaulted way they were entering the region of the shades.

Scouring the streets in search of a flat, they had chanced to cross the narrow Rue des Grands-Augustins, which has preserved its old-world aspect, and whose greasy pavements are never dry. They remembered that they had passed six years of their childhood in one of the houses in this street. Their father, a professor at the University, had settled there in 1856, after having led for four years a wandering and precarious existence, ceaselessly hunted from town to town by an inimical Minister of Instruction. And, as witnessed the

battered notice-board, the very flat in which Lucien and Zoe had first seen the light of day, and tasted the savour of life, was now to let.

As they passed down the path which led under the massive forefront of the building, they experienced an inexplicable feeling of melancholy and reverence. The damp courtyard was hemmed in by walls which since the minority of Louis XIV had slowly been crumbling in the rains and the fogs rising from the Seine. On the right as they entered was a small building, which served as a porter's lodge. There, on the window-sill, a magpie hopped about in a cage, and in the lodge, behind a flowering plant, a woman sat sewing.

"Is the second floor on the courtyard to let?"

"Yes, do you wish to see it?"

"Yes, we should like to see it."

Key in hand, the concierge led the way. They followed her in silence. The gloomy antiquity of the house caused the memories which the blackened stones evoked for the brother and sister to recede into an unfathomable past. They climbed the stone stairs in a state of sorrowful eagerness, and when the concierge opened the door of the flat they remained motionless upon the landing, afraid to enter the rooms that seemed to be haunted by the host of their childish memories, like so many little ghosts.

"You can go in; the flat is empty."

At first they could find nothing of the past in the wide empty rooms, freshly papered. They were amazed to find that they had become strangers to things which had formerly been so familiar.

"Here is the kitchen," said the concierge, "and here are the dining-room and the drawing-room."

A voice cried from the courtyard:

"M'ame Falempin!"

The concierge looked out of the window, apologized, and grumbling to herself went down the stairs with feeble steps, groaning. Then the brother and sister began to remember. Memories of inimitable hours, of the long days of childhood, began to return to them.

"Here is the dining-room," said Zoe. "The sideboard used to be there, against the wall."

"The mahogany sideboard, 'battered by its long wanderings,' as our father used to say, when he and his family and his furniture were ceaselessly hunted from north to south and from east to west by the Minister of the 2nd of December. It remained here a few years, however, maimed and crippled."

"There is the porcelain stove in its old corner."

"The flue is different."

"Do you think so?"

"Yes, Zoe. Ours had a head of Jupiter Tro-

phonius upon it. In those far-off days it was the custom of the stove-makers in the Cour du Dragon to decorate porcelain flues with a head of Jupiter Trophonius."

"Are you sure?"

"Sure. Don't you remember a crowned head with a pointed beard?"

"No."

"Oh, well that is not surprising; you were always indifferent to the shapes of things. You don't look at anything."

"I am more observant than you, my poor Lucien; it is you who never notice things. The other day, when Pauline had waved her hair, you didn't notice it. If it were not for me——"

She did not finish her sentence, but peered about the empty room with her green eyes and sharp nose.

"Over there in that corner near the window, Mademoiselle Verpie used to sit with her feet on her foot-warmer. Saturday was the sewing-woman's day, and Mademoiselle Verpie never missed a Saturday."

"Mademoiselle Verpie," said Lucien with a sigh: "how old would she be to-day? She was getting on in life when we were children. She used to tell a story about a box of matches. I have always remembered that story and can repeat it now word

for word just as she used to tell it. 'It was when they were placing the statues on the Pont des Saints-Pères. It was so cold that my fingers were quite numb. Coming back from doing my marketing, I was watching the workmen. There was a whole crowd of people waiting to see how they would lift such heavy statues. I had my basket on my arm. A well-dressed gentleman said to me, "Mademoiselle, you are on fire." Then I smelt a smell of sulphur and saw smoke pouring out of my basket. My threepenny box of matches had caught fire.' That was how Mademoiselle Verpie related the adventure," added Monsieur Bergeret. "She often used to tell us of it. Probably it was the greatest adventure of her life."

"You've forgotten an important part of the story, Lucien. These were Mademoiselle Verpie's exact words: 'A well-dressed gentleman said to me, "Mademoiselle, you are on fire." I answered "Go away and leave me alone." "Just as you like, Mademoiselle." Then I smelt a smell of sulphur.' "

"You are quite right, Zoe. I was mutilating the text and omitted an important passage. By her reply, Mademoiselle Verpie, who was hump-backed, showed that she was a virtuous woman. It is a point that one should bear in mind. I seem to recollect, too, that she was very easily shocked."

"Our poor mother," said Zoe, "had a mania for mending. What an amount of darning used to be done!"

"Yes, she was fond of her needle. But what I thought so charming was that before she sat down to her sewing she always placed a pot of wallflowers or daisies or a dish of fruit and green leaves on the table before her just where the light caught it. She used to say that rosy apples were as pretty as roses. I never met any one who appreciated as she did the beauty of a peach or a bunch of grapes. When she went to see the Chardins at the Louvre, she knew by instinct that they were good pictures, but she could not help feeling that she preferred her own groups. With what conviction she would say to me: 'Look, Lucien, have you ever seen anything so beautiful as this feather from a pigeon's wing?' I think no one ever loved nature more simply and frankly than she."

"Poor Mother," sighed Zoe, "and in spite of that her taste in dress was dreadful. One day she chose a blue dress for me at the Petit-Saint-Thomas. It was called electric blue, and it was terrible. That frock was the burden of my childish days."

"You were never fond of dress, you."

"You think so, do you? Well, you are mistaken. I should have loved to have pretty dresses, but the

elder sister had to go short because little Lucien needed tunics. It couldn't be helped."

They passed into a narrow room, more like a passage.

"This was Father's study," said Zoe.

"Hasn't it been cut in two by a partition? I thought it was much larger than this."

"No, it was always the same as it is now. His writing-desk was there, and above it hung the portrait of Monsieur Victor Leclerc. Why haven't you kept that engraving, Lucien?"

"What! do you mean to say that this narrow room held his motley crowds of books and contained whole nations of poets, orators and historians? When I was a child I used to listen to the silent eloquence that filled my ears with a buzz of glory. No doubt the presence of such an assembly pressed back the walls. I certainly remember it as a spacious room."

"It was very overcrowded. He would never let us tidy anything in his study."

"So it was here that our father used to work, seated in his old red arm-chair with his cat Zobeide on a cushion at his feet. Here it was that he used to look at us with the same slow smile that he never lost all through his illness, even up to the very last. I saw him smile gently at death itself, as he had smiled at life."

"You are mistaken in that, Lucien. Father did not know he was going to die."

Monsieur Bergeret did not speak for a moment, then he said:

"It is strange. I can see him now, in memory, not worn out and white with age, but still young as he was when I was quite a little child. I can see his slight, supple figure and his long black wind-tossed hair. Such mops of hair, that seemed as though whipped up by a gust of wind, crowned many of the enthusiastic heads of the men of 1830 and '48. I know it was only a trick of the brush that arranged their hair like that, but it made them look as though they lived upon the heights and in the storm. Their thoughts were loftier and more generous than ours. Our father believed in the advent of social justice and universal peace. He announced the triumph of the Republic and the harmonious formation of the United States of Europe. He would be cruelly disappointed were he to come back among us."

He was still speaking although Mademoiselle Bergeret was no longer in the study. He followed her into the empty drawing-room. There they both recalled the arm-chairs and sofa of green velvet, which as children, in their games, they used to turn into walls and citadels.

"Oh, the taking of Damietta!" cried Monsieur

Bergeret. "Do you remember it, Zoe? Mother, who allowed nothing to be wasted, used to collect all the silver paper round the bars of chocolate, and one day she gave me a pile which pleased me as much as if it had been a magnificent present. I gummed it to the leaves of an old atlas and made it into helmets and cuirasses. One day when Cousin Paul came to dinner I gave him one of these sets of armour, a Saracen's, and put the other on myself: it was the armour of St. Louis. If one goes into the matter, neither Saracens nor Christian knights wore such armour in the thirteenth century, but such a consideration did not trouble us, and I took Damietta.

"That recollection reminds me of the cruellest humiliation of my life. As soon as I had made myself master of Damietta, I took Cousin Paul prisoner and tied him up with skipping-ropes; then I pushed him with such enthusiasm that he fell on his nose, uttering piercing shrieks in spite of his courage. Mother came running in when she heard the noise, and when she saw Cousin Paul bound and prostrate on the floor she picked him up, kissed him and said: 'You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Lucien, to hit a child so much smaller than yourself.' And as a matter of fact Cousin Paul, who never grew very big, was then very small. I did not say that it had happened in the wars. I

said nothing at all, and remained covered with confusion. My shame was increased by the magnanimity of Cousin Paul who said, between his sobs, 'I haven't hurt myself.'

"Ah our beautiful drawing-room," sighed Monsieur Bergeret. "I hardly know it with this new paper. How I loved the ugly old paper with its green boughs! What a gentle shade, what a delicious warmth dwelt in the folds of the hideous claret-coloured rep curtains! Spartacus with folded arms used to look at us indignantly from the top of the clock on the mantelpiece. His chains, which I used idly to play with, came off one day in my hand. Our beautiful drawing-room! Mother would sometimes call us in there when she was entertaining old friends. We used to come here to kiss Mademoiselle Lalouette. She was over eighty years of age; her cheeks were covered with a mossy growth and her chin was bearded. One long yellow tooth protruded from her lips. They were spotted with black. What magic makes the memory of that horrible little old woman full of an attractive charm for me now? What force compels me to recall details of her queer far-away personality? Mademoiselle Lalouette and her four cats lived on an annuity of fifteen hundred francs, one half of which she spent in printing pamphlets on Louis XVII. She always had about a dozen of

them in her hand-bag. The good lady's mania was to prove that the Dauphin escaped from the Temple in a wooden horse. Do you remember the day she gave us lunch in her room in the Rue de Verneuil, Zoe? There, under layers of ancient filth, lay mysterious riches, boxes full of gold and embroideries."

"Yes," said Zoe, "she showed us some lace that had belonged to Marie Antoinette."

"Mademoiselle Lalouette's manners were excellent," continued Monsieur Bergeret. "She spoke the purest French and adhered to the old pronunciation. She used to say 'un *segret,* un *fil,* une *do*'; she made me feel as though I were living in the reign of Louis XVI. Mother used to send for us also to speak to Monsieur Mathalène who was not so old as Mademoiselle Lalouette; but he had a hideous face. Never did a gentler soul reveal itself in a more frightful shape. He was an inhibited priest whom my father had met in the clubs in 1848 and whom he esteemed for his Republican opinions. Poorer than Mademoiselle Lalouette, Monsieur Mathalène would go without food in order, like her, to print his pamphlets; but his went to prove that the sun and the moon move round the earth and are in reality no bigger than cheeses. That, by the way, was the opinion of Pierrot, but Monsieur Mathalène arrived at his conclusion only after thirty

years of meditation and calculation. One still comes upon one of his pamphlets occasionally on the old bookstalls. Monsieur Mathalène was full of zeal for the happiness of mankind, whom he terrified by his dreadful ugliness. The only exceptions to his universal love were the astronomers, whom he suspected of the blackest designs on himself. He imagined that they wanted to poison him, and insisted on preparing his own food as much out of prudence as on account of his poverty."

Thus in the empty rooms, like Ulysses in the land of the Cimmerii, did Monsieur Bergeret evoke the shades. For a moment he remained sunk in thought; then he said:

"Zoe, it must be one of two things; either in the days of our childhood there were more maniacs about than there are now, or our father befriended more than his fair share. I think he must have liked them. Pity probably drew him to them, or maybe he found them less tedious than other people; anyhow, he had a great following of them."

Mademoiselle Bergeret shook her head.

"Our parents used to receive very sensible and deserving people. I should say rather that the harmless peculiarities of some old people impressed you, and that you have retained a vivid memory of them."

"Zoe, make no mistake; we were both brought

up among people who did not think in a common or usual fashion. Mademoiselle Lalouette, Abbé Mathalène and Monsieur Grille were wanting in ordinary common sense, that is certain. Do you remember Monsieur Grille? He was tall and stout, with a red face and a close-clipped white beard. He had lost both his sons in an Alpine accident in Switzerland, and ever since, summer and winter alike, he had worn garments made of bed-ticking. Our father considered him an exquisite Hellenist. He had a delicate feeling for the poetry of the Greek lyrics. He touched with a light and sure hand the hackneyed text of Theocritus. It was his happy mania never to believe in the certain death of his two sons, and while with crazy confidence he awaited their return he lived, clad in the raiment of a carnival clown, in loving intimacy with Alcæus and Sappho."

"He used to give us caramels," said Mademoiselle Bergeret.

"His remarks were always wise, well-expressed and beautiful," went on Monsieur Bergeret, "and that used to frighten us. Logic is what alarms us most in a madman."

"On Sunday nights the drawing room was ours," said Mademoiselle Bergeret.

"Yes," said Monsieur Bergeret. "It was there we used to play games after dinner. We used to

write verses and draw pictures, and mother would play forfeits with us. Oh, the candour and simplicity of those bygone days! The simple pleasures, the charm of the old-world manners! We used to play charades; we ransacked your wardrobes, Zoe, in search of things to dress up in."

"One day you pulled the white curtains off my bed."

"That was to make robes for the Druids in the mistletoe scene, Zoe. The word we chose was *guimauve*. We were very good at charades, and Father was such a splendid audience. He did not listen to a word, but he smiled at us. I think I should have been quite a good actor, but the grown-ups never gave me a chance; they always wanted to do all the talking."

"Don't labour under any delusions, Lucien; you were incapable of playing your part in a charade. You are too absent-minded. I am the first to recognise your intellect and your talents, but you never had the gift of improvisation. You must not try to go outside your books and manuscripts."

"I am just to myself, Zoe, and I know I am not eloquent; but when Jules Guinaut and Uncle Maurice played with us one could not get a word in."

"Jules Guinaut had a real talent for comedy,"

said Mademoiselle Bergeret, "and an unquenchable spirit."

"He was studying medicine," said Monsieur Bergeret. "A good-looking fellow!"

"So people used to say."

"I think he was in love with you."

"I don't think so."

"He paid you a great deal of attention."

"That's quite a different matter."

"Then, quite suddenly, he disappeared."

"Yes."

"Don't you know what became of him?"

"No. Come, Lucien, let us go."

"Yes, let us go, Zoe; here we are the prey of the shades."

And, without turning their heads, the brother and sister stepped over the threshold of their childhood's old home and went silently down the stone staircase. When they found themselves again in the Rue des Grands-Augustins, amid the cabs and drays, the housewives and the artisans, the noise and movement of the outer world bewildered them as though they had just emerged from a long period of solitude.

CHAPTER V

ONSIEUR PANNETON DE LA BARGE had prominent eyes and a shallow mind. But his skin was so shiny that you could not help thinking that his mind must of necessity be of a fatty nature. His whole being was eloquent of arrogance, brusqueness and a pride that apparently had no fear of being importunate. Monsieur Bergeret guessed that the man had come to ask a favour of him.

They had known one another in the country. The professor, taking a walk beside the sluggish river, had often noted, on a green hillside, the slated roof of the château inhabited by Monsieur de La Barge and his family. Monsieur de La Barge himself he saw less frequently, for the latter was on visiting terms with the aristocracy of the countryside, without being sufficiently grand himself to receive the humbler folk. In the country he knew Monsieur Bergeret only on those critical days when one or another of his sons was going in for some

examination; but now, in Paris, he wished to be friendly, and he made an effort to be so.

"Dear Monsieur Bergeret, I must first of all congratulate you."

"Please do not trouble," replied Monsieur Bergeret, with a little gesture of refusal that Monsieur de La Barge quite wrongly interpreted as inspired by modesty.

"I beg your pardon, Monsieur Bergeret, a professorship at the Sorbonne is a much-coveted position, and one that you well deserve."

"How is your son Adhémar?" inquired Monsieur Bergeret, remembering the name as that of a candidate for the bachelor's degree who had interested in his incompetence the authorities of civil, military and ecclesiastical society.

"Adhémar? He is doing well, very well; a little wild perhaps, but what would you have? He has nothing to do. In some ways it might be better for him to have some settled occupation. However, he is very young; there is plenty of time; he takes after me; he will settle down once he has found his vocation."

"Didn't he do a little demonstrating at Auteuil?" asked Monsieur Bergeret gently.

"For the army, for the army," answered Monsieur de La Barge, "and I must confess that I could not find it in my heart to blame him. It

can't be helped. I am connected with the army through my father-in-law, the general, my brothers-in-law, and my cousin, the commandant."

He was too modest to mention his father, the eldest of the Panneton brothers, who was also connected with the army through the supply department, and who, in 1872, as the result of an annoying charge in the police courts, was given a light sentence, for having supplied to the Army of the East, which was marching through the snow, shoes with cardboard soles.

He died ten years later, in his château of La Barge, rich and honoured.

"I was brought up to venerate the army," continued Monsieur Panneton de La Barge. "When quite a child I worshipped a uniform. It is a family tradition. I do not attempt to hide the fact that I hold by the old style of things. I can't help it, it is in my blood. I am a Monarchist and authoritarian by temperament. I am a Royalist. Now the army is all that is left us of the Monarchy; all that is left of a glorious past. It consoles us for the present and fills us with hope for the future."

Monsieur Bergeret might have interposed with some observations of historical interest; but he did not do so, and Monsieur de La Barge continued:

"That is why I regard those who attack the

army as criminals, and those who would dare to interfere with it as fools."

"When Napoleon wished to praise one of the plays of Luce de Lancival," replied the professor, "he called it a headquarters tragedy. May I say that your philosophy is that of a General Staff? However, seeing that we live under the rule of liberty, it may perhaps be as well to conform to its customs. When one lives with men who have the habit of speech one must accustom oneself to hear anything. Do not hope that the right to discuss any subject will ever again be denied in France. Consider, too, that the army is by no means immutable; nothing in the world is that. Institutions can exist only by ceaseless modifications. The army has undergone such transformations in the course of its existence that it will probably undergo even greater changes in the future, and it is conceivable that in twenty years' time it will be quite another thing than what it is to-day."

"I prefer to tell you at once," replied Monsieur Panneton de La Barge, "that where the army is concerned I admit of no discussion. I repeat, it must not be interfered with. It represents, as it were, the battle-axe, and as such it must not be touched. During the last session of the Conseil Général of which I have the honour to be president, the Radical-Socialist minority put forward a vote in

favour of two years' service. I protested against so unpatriotic a suggestion. I had no difficulty in proving a two years' service would mean the end of the army. You cannot make an infantryman in two years, much less a cavalryman. Perhaps you will style those who clamour for the two years' service reformers. I call them wreckers. And it is the same with all other reforms. They are machinations directed against the army. If only the Socialists would say that their desire is to replace the army by a vast national guard, they would at least be honest."

"The Socialists," replied Monsieur Bergeret, "are against all attempts at territorial conquest; they propose to organize militia solely for purposes of home defence. They do not hide their views, they spread them broadcast. And possibly their views are worth some examination. You need not fear that their desires will be too quickly realized. All progress is slow and uncertain, and is followed, more often than not, by retrograde movements. The advance toward a better order of things is vague and indeterminate. The profound and innumerable forces which chain man to the past cause him to cherish its errors, superstitions, prejudices and cruelties as precious symbols of his security. Salutary innovation terrifies him. Prudence makes him imitative, and he dare not quit the tumble-down

shelter that protected his fathers and which is about to fall in upon him. Do you not agree with me, Monsieur Panneton?" inquired Monsieur Bergeret, with a charming smile.

Monsieur Panneton de La Barge's reply was that he defended the army. He represented it as misunderstood, persecuted and menaced, and in rising tones he continued:

"This campaign in favour of the Traitor, obstinate and enthusiastic as it is, whatever may be the intentions of its leaders, has a certain visible and undeniable effect. It weakens the army and injures its chiefs."

"I am going to tell you some very simple facts," replied Monsieur Bergeret. "If the army is attacked in the person of certain of its chiefs, that is not the fault of those who have asked for justice; it is the fault of those who have so long refused it. It is not the fault of those who demanded an explanation, but of those who have obstinately avoided one with extraordinary stupidity and abominable wickedness. After all, if crimes have been committed the evil is not that they have been made known but that they have been committed. They have concealed themselves in all their enormity and in all their deformity. They were not recognisable; they passed over the crowds like dark clouds. Did you imagine they

would never burst? Did you think the sun would never shine again upon the classic land of Justice, upon the country that taught the Law to Europe and the world?"

"Don't let us speak of the Affair," replied Monsieur de La Barge. "I know nothing of it. I wish to know nothing. I did not read a word of the Inquiry. Commandant de La Barge, my cousin, assured me that Dreyfus was guilty. That affirmation was enough for me. I came, dear Monsieur Bergeret, to ask your advice about my son Adhémar, whose prospects in life are now engaging my attention. A year of military service is a long time for a young fellow of good family. Three years would be nothing short of disaster. It is essential to find a means of exemption. I had thought of letting him take his degree in literature, but I'm afraid it is too difficult. Adhémar is intelligent, but he has no taste for literature."

"Well," said Monsieur Bergeret, "try the School of Higher Commercial Studies; or the Commercial Institute, or the School of Commerce. I do not know if the Watchmakers' College at Cluses would still furnish means of exemption. It used not to be difficult, I've been told, to obtain the certificate."

"But Adhémar cannot very well make watches,"

replied Monsieur de La Barge with a certain modesty.

"Then try the School of Oriental Languages," said Monsieur Bergeret obligingly. "It was an excellent institution to begin with."

"It has gone down since," sighed Monsieur de La Barge.

"It still has its good points. What about Tamil, for instance?"

"Tamil, do you think?"

"Or Malagasy."

"Malagasy, perhaps."

"There is also a certain Polynesian language which was spoken, at the beginning of this century, by only one old yellow woman. She died, leaving behind her a parrot. A German scholar collected a few words of the language from the parrot, and from these he compiled a dictionary. Perhaps this language is still taught at the School of Oriental Languages. I should advise your son to find out."

Upon this advice, Monsieur Panneton de La Barge made his adieux and thoughtfully took his departure.

CHAPTER VI

EVENTS followed their due course. Monsieur Bergeret continued to look for a flat; it was his sister who found one. Thus the positive mind has the advantage over the speculative mind. It must be admitted that Mademoiselle Bergeret made an excellent choice. She was lacking neither in experience of life nor in common sense. Having been a governess, she had lived in Russia, and had travelled about Europe. She had observed the manners and customs of the different nations. She knew the world, and that helped her to know Paris.

"That's it," she said to her brother, stopping before a new house overlooking the Luxembourg garden.

"The stairs look decent enough," said Monsieur Bergeret, "but it's rather a stiff climb."

"Nonsense, Lucien. You are quite young enough to go up five short flights of stairs without getting exhausted."

"Do you really think so?" said Lucien, flattered.

She was careful to point out that the stair-carpet ran right to the top of the house, and he smilingly accused her of being susceptible to trifling vanities.

"But it is possible," he added, "that I myself should feel slightly offended were the carpet to stop short at the floor below ours. We profess to be wise, but we still have our weak points. That reminds me of what I noticed yesterday, after lunch, as I was passing a church. The outer steps were covered with a red carpet which had been trodden, after the ceremony, by the guests at some great wedding. A working-class couple with their party were waiting for the last of the wealthy company to leave so that they might enter the church. They were laughing at the idea of climbing the steps upon this unexpected splendour. The little bride's white feet were already on the edge of the carpet when the beadle waved her away. The men in charge of the trappings of the wealthy wedding slowly rolled up the carpet of honour, and only when it formed a huge cylinder did they allow the humble wedding party to mount the bare steps. I stood for a moment and watched the worthy folk, who seemed greatly amused by the incident. Humble folk surrender with admirable equanimity to social inequality, and Lamennais was quite right to say

'that the whole social order rests on the resignation of the poor.' "

"Here we are," said Mademoiselle Bergeret.

"I'm out of breath," remarked Monsieur Bergeret.

"Because you would talk," replied Mademoiselle Bergeret. "You shouldn't tell anecdotes while you are going upstairs."

"After all," said Monsieur Bergeret, "it is the common destiny of men of learning to live close under the roof. Science and meditation are often hidden away in garrets, and when we come to think of it, no marble hall is worth an attic filled with beautiful thoughts."

"This room," replied Mademoiselle Bergeret, "is not a garret. It is lighted by a big window and is to be your study."

On hearing this, Monsieur Bergeret looked at the four walls in alarm, like a man on the brink of a precipice.

"What is the matter?" asked his sister uneasily.

But he did not reply. The little square room, hung with light paper, seemed to him dark with the unknown future. He entered with a slow and fearful step as though he were entering upon a hidden destiny. Then, measuring on the floor the position of his work-table, he said:

"I shall sit there. It is a mistake to be too

sentimental over the past and the future. They are nothing but abstract ideas, which were not originally possessed by primitive man; he acquired them only after long effort, to his great misfortune. The thought of the past in itself is sufficiently painful. I do not think any one would be willing to begin life again if he had to go over precisely the same ground. That there are delightful hours and exquisite moments I do not deny, but they are pearls and precious stones sparsely sprinkled on the harsh and dismal web of life. The course of the years is, for all its brevity, of tedious slowness, and if it be sometimes sweet to remember it is because we are able to make our minds dwell upon certain moments. And even then the sweetness is pale and melancholy. As for the future, we dare not look it in the face, so threatening is its gloomy countenance. And when you told me a moment since, Zoe, that this was to be my study, I saw myself in the future, and I could not bear the sight. I am not without courage, I think, but I am given to reflection, and reflection and fearlessness are not the best of friends."

"The most difficult thing of all," put in Zoe, "was to find three bedrooms."

"It is certain," rejoined Monsieur Bergeret, "that humanity, in its youth, did not conceive of the future and the past as we do. Now these ideas

that devour us have no reality outside ourselves. We know nothing of life, and the theory of its development through time is pure illusion. It is by some infirmity of our senses that we do not see to-morrow realised as we see yesterday. We can very well conceive of beings so organized as to be capable of the simultaneous perception of phenomena which to us appear to be separated from one another by an appreciable interval of time. We ourselves do not perceive light and sound in the order of time. We ourselves take in at a single glance, when we raise our eyes to the sky, aspects which are by no means contemporaneous. The beams of light from the stars seem indistinguishable to our eyes, yet they mingle in them, in a fraction of a second, centuries and thousands of centuries. With instruments other than those we now possess we might see ourselves lying dead in the very midst of our own life. For, as time does not in reality exist, and as the succession of facts is only an appearance, all facts are realized simultaneously and there is no such thing as the future. The future has already been; we merely discover it. Now, perhaps, you have some idea, Zoe, why I stopped short at the door of the room where I am to live. Time is a pure idea, and space is no more real than time."

"That may be," remarked Zoe, "but it is very expensive in Paris at any rate. You must have

noticed that while you were house-hunting. I don't expect you care to see my room; come, Pauline's will interest you more."

"Let us go and see them both," said Monsieur Bergeret, as he obediently promenaded his animal mechanism through the little square rooms hung with flowered paper, pursuing the course of his reflections the while.

"The savages," he said, "make no distinction between past, present and future. Languages, which are undoubtedly the oldest monuments of the human race, permit us to go back to the days when our ancestors had not yet accomplished this metaphysical operation. Monsieur Michel Bréal, who has just published an admirable essay on the subject, shows that the verb, so rich to-day in its resources for marking the priority of an action, had originally no means of expressing the past, and in order to perform this function forms were employed which implied a double affirmation of the present."

As he spoke, he returned to the room which was to be his study, which had at first sight seemed, in its emptiness, to be filled with the shadows of the ineffable future.

Mademoiselle Bergeret opened the window.

"Look, Lucien."

And, seeing the bare tops of the trees, Monsieur Bergeret smiled.

"These black boughs," he said, "will assume, in the timid April sunlight, the purple hue of their buds; then they will break forth into soft green foliage. That will be delightful. It will, indeed, be charming. Zoe, you are full of wisdom and kindness, a worthy steward and a most endearing sister. Let me kiss you."

Monsieur Bergeret kissed his sister, repeating:

"You are a good creature, Zoe."

And Mademoiselle Bergeret's reply was:

"Our father and mother were both good."

Monsieur Bergeret would have embraced her a second time, but she protested:

"You'll make my hair untidy, Lucien, and that I can't bear."

Monsieur Bergeret stretched out his hand as he stood by the open window.

"Look, Zoe, to the right. On the site of those ugly buildings used to be the Pépinière. There, our elders have told me, was a maze of paths bordered by green trelliswork windows among the shrubs. Our father used to walk there when he was a young man. He used to read the philosophy of Kant and the novels of George Sand, seated on a bench behind the statue of Velléda. A dreaming Velléda, with hands folded over her mystic sickle, and crossed

legs, who was the object of much generous and youthful adoration. The students used to sit at her feet discussing love, justice and liberty. They did not enlist in those days in the party of untruth, injustice and tyranny.

"The Empire destroyed the Pépinière. It was an evil deed, for there is a soul even in inanimate things. The noble ideas of many young men perished with the gardens. How many beautiful dreams and stupendous hopes have taken shape under the shadow of Maindron's romantic Velléda! To-day our students have palaces with a bust of the President of the Republic over the mantelpiece in the principal room. Who will restore to them the winding alleys of the Pépinière, where they were wont to discuss the establishment of peace and happiness and the liberty of the world? Who will give back to them the garden where, amid the joyous songs of the birds, they repeated the generous sayings of their masters, Quinet and Michelet?"

"No doubt they were enthusiastic enough," said Mademoiselle Bergeret, "but in the end they became doctors and lawyers in their own provinces. One must resign oneself to the mediocrity of life. You know well enough, it is very difficult to live, and one must not expect too much of one's fellow-creatures. Anyhow, do you like the rooms?"

"Yes, and I'm sure Pauline will be delighted. She has a charming room."

"She has, but young girls are never delighted with anything."

"Pauline is not unhappy with us."

"No, indeed. She is very happy, but she does not realize it."

"I am going to the Rue Saint-Jacques," announced Monsieur Bergeret, "to ask Roupart to put up some shelves in my study."

CHAPTER VII

ONSIEUR BERGERET had a great liking and esteem for craftsmen. As he did not indulge in any elaborate appointments, he rarely employed workmen, but, when he did employ one, he tried to enter into conversation with him, being sure of hearing something worth listening to.

So he extended a gracious welcome to Roupart, the carpenter, who came one morning to put up some bookshelves in his study.

Riquet, as was his custom, lay in the depths of his master's arm-chair, peacefully slumbering. But the immemorial recollection of the perils which surrounded his wild forbears in the forests makes the domestic dog sleep lightly. It should further be said that this hereditary readiness to awaken promptly was fostered in Riquet by the sense of duty. Riquet regarded himself as a watch-dog Firmly convinced that his mission in life was to guard the house, he was proud and happy in his vocation.

Unfortunately, however, he thought of all

houses as being what they are in the country or the fables of La Fontaine, standing betwixt courtyard and garden, of which a dog could make the circuit, sniffing a soil redolent of the odours of cattle and manure. He had formed no idea of the plan of the flat occupied by his master on the fifth story of a great block of buildings. So, unacquainted with the limits of his domain, he was not quite clear as to what he had to guard. And he was a ferocious guardian. Supposing that the appearance of this stranger clad in patched blue trousers, smelling of perspiration and carrying his load of planks, was imperilling the house, he leaped from his chair and proceeded to bark at the man, retreating before him with heroic deliberation. Monsieur Bergeret bade him be silent, and he regretfully obeyed, sad and surprised to see his devotion useless and his signals disregarded. His earnest gaze, turned upon his master, seemed to say:

"So you allow this anarchist to enter, dragging his infernal machine behind him. Well, come what may, I've done my duty."

Then he went back to his chair and slept again. Monsieur Bergeret, abandoning the scholiasts of Virgil, entered into conversation with the carpenter. First he questioned him as to the purchasing, cutting and polishing of different woods and the joining of the planks. He loved to obtain fresh information

and he realized the excellence of the vulgar tongue.

His face to the wall, Roupart answered him between intervals of long silence, during which he took measurements. It was then that he discussed panelling and the making of joints.

"A tenon and mortice joint needs no glue if the work is properly done."

"Is there not also such a thing as a dovetail joint?" inquired Monsieur Bergeret.

"It's an old-fashioned affair; they don't make 'em now," replied the carpenter.

Thus the professor learned something by listening to the artisan. Having made sufficient headway with his work, the carpenter turned to Monsieur Bergeret. His sunken, large-featured face, his brown complexion, his hair matted over his forehead, and his little goatee, grey with dust, gave him the look of a bronze figure. His smile, which was gentle, but came with difficulty, showed his white teeth and gave him a youthful look.

"I know you, Monsieur Bergeret."

"Do you really?"

"Oh yes, I know you. That was something a bit out of the common what you did, and no mistake. You don't mind my mentioning it, I hope?"

"Not in the least."

"Well, then, you did something quite out of the

common. You cut your own class, refused to have any truck with the brass hats and sky pilots."

"I hate forgers, my friend," replied Monsieur Bergeret. "Surely that is permissible in a philologist. I have made no secret of my opinions, but I have not gone out of my way to spread them. How did you get to know of them?"

"I will tell you. One sees all sorts of people at the workshop in the Rue Saint-Jacques. All sorts and conditions, big and little. One day I was planing some wood, and I heard Pierre say: 'That low-down cur of a Bergeret.' And Paul asks him, 'Won't somebody smash his jaw for him?' And then I realized that you were on the right side in the Affair. There aren't many like you in this part of Paris."

"And what do your friends say?"

"There aren't many Socialists hereabouts, and the few there are don't agree. Last Saturday at the club there was a lot of tag-rag and bobtail and the whole lot of us started quarrelling. Old Fléchier, who fought in 1870, a Communard, who was deported—he's a man, he is—he got up on the platform and said: 'Citizens, keep your hair on! The intellectual bourgeois are no less bourgeois than the military bourgeois. Let the capitalists scratch each other's eyes out. Fold your arms and keep your eyes on the anti-Semites. At present they

are drilling with sham guns and wooden swords, but when the time comes to expropriate the capitalists I don't see why we shouldn't make a start with the Jews.'

"That pretty well brought the house down. But, I ask you, should an old Communard, a good revolutionary, talk in that way? I am not educated like old Fléchier, who has read Marx, but I could see well enough that his arguments were all wrong. It seems to me that Socialism, which stands for truth, should also stand for justice and kindliness, that everything just and kindly must come from it as naturally as the apple comes from the apple-tree. I take it that when we fight against injustice we are fighting for ourselves, for the working-classes, because it's on us that all injustice lies so heavy. In my opinion, everything that is equitable is a beginning of Socialism. Like Jaurès, I believe that to take sides with the upholders of violence and falsehood is to turn one's back upon the social revolution. I know nothing of Jews or Christians. I recognize only men—and there again the only distinction I make is between the just and the unjust. Jews or Christians, it is difficult for the rich to be just; but when the laws are just, men will be just too. Even now the Collectivists and Anarchists are preparing for the future by fighting against tyranny and inspiring

the people with hatred of war and love for their fellow-men. Even now we can do something. It'll keep us from dying desperate with the bitterness of rage in our hearts. For sure enough we shan't see the triumph of our ideas, and when Collectivism is established all over the world I shall have been carried feet foremost from my garret a long while before. But there! I'm jawing and the time's going."

He pulled out his watch, and seeing that it was eleven o'clock he put on his waistcoat, picked up his tools, and ramming his cap on the back of his head, said, without turning round:

"It's a sure thing that the middle classes are rotten. The Dreyfus case showed that plainly enough."

With that, he went off to his dinner.

Then, with wide-open mouth, bristling hair and flaming eyes, Riquet rushed at Roupart's departing heels, pursuing them with frantic barks. It may have been that a bad dream had troubled his light slumber and caused him to take advantage of the enemy's retreat, or, as his master feigned to believe, that his anger had been aroused by the name which had just been pronounced.

Alone with Riquet, Monsieur Bergeret addressed him gently in these sorrowful words:

"You, too, poor little blackamoor, so feeble in

spite of your sharp teeth and your deep bark, the apparent strength of which renders your weakness ridiculous and your cowardice amusing—you, too, worship the pomps of the flesh. You bow to the old iniquities and worship injustice out of respect for the social order that gives you food and a roof over your head. You, too, would uphold an illegal judgment obtained by fraud and untruth; you, too, are the plaything of appearances and allow yourself to be seduced by lies. You have been brought up on clumsy falsehoods and your darkened mind feeds on the works of darkness. You deceive and are deceived with delightful thoroughness, and you, too, have your racial hatreds, your cruel prejudices and your contempt for the unfortunate."

And as Riquet gazed at his master with a look of innocence Monsieur Bergeret continued still more gently:

"Yes, I know: you have a vague goodness, the goodness of a Caliban. You are a pious dog; you have your theology and your morality, and you try to do well. But then you know nothing. You keep watch over the house, guarding it even against its friends and those who would make it more beautiful. The workman whom you wanted to drive out of the house has, in his simple fashion, some admirable ideas. But you did not listen to him.

"Your shaggy ears are turned not to him whose

words are wisest but to him who makes the most noise; and the natural fear which in the days of the cave-dwellers was the wise counsellor of your ancestors and of mine—the fear that created the gods and crime—makes you turn from the unfortunate and deprives you of pity. And you do not even want to be just. The white face of the new goddess Justice is strange to you, and you prostrate yourself before the old gods, black like yourself with fear and violence. You admire brute force, thinking it the sovereign power, because you do not know that it destroys itself. You do not know that all chains must fall before a just idea.

"You do not know that true strength lies in wisdom and that through wisdom alone the nations rise to greatness. You do not know that that which makes the glory of the nations is not the senseless clamour raised in public places, but the noble thought concealed in some garret, which, spreading one day over the whole world, will change its face. You do not know that those who have suffered imprisonment, outrage and exile, for justice' sake, have honoured their country in the act You do not understand."

CHAPTER VIII

MONSIEUR BERGERET was in his study chatting with his pupil, Monsieur Goubin.

"I found to-day," he said, "in a friend's library, a little book which is extremely rare and perhaps unique. Whether he is ignorant of its existence, or thinks it of little value, Brunet does not mention it in his Manual. It is a little duodecimo entitled: *Les charactères et pourtraictures tracés d'après les modelles anticques.* It was printed in the year 1538 in the learned Rue Saint-Jacques."

"Do you know the author?" inquired Monsieur Goubin.

"The author is a certain Master Nicole Langelier, a Parisian," replied Monsieur Bergeret. "His style is not so pleasant as that of Amyot, but it is clear and full of meaning. I enjoyed reading his book, and copied out a chapter that struck me as very curious. Would you care to hear it?"

"Very much," replied Monsieur Goubin.

Monsieur Bergeret took some papers from the table and read the heading:

"Concerning the Trublions which arose in the time of the Republick."

Monsieur Goubin inquired who these Trublions were. Monsieur Bergeret replied that he would no doubt discover that from what followed, and that it was a good plan to read a text before commenting on it. And he read as follows:

"In those days there appeared in the city folk that uttered loud cries and were named Trublions, inasmuch as they served a chief named Trublion, who was of high lineage but small understanding and full of the arrogance of youth. And the Trublions also had another chief named Tintinnabule who made excellent speeches and marvellous songs and had been cast forth from the republick by the law and usage of ostracism. In truth the said Tintinnabule was adverse to Trublion; when the one pulled up stream the other pulled down. But the Trublions cared nothing for that, being so crazy that they did not know whither they were steering.

"At that time there lived in the mountains a villager named Robin Honeyman, who had already a hoary head, like a shock of hay or straw; a person full of guile and subtlety, and very expert in the art of feigning, who believed that he could govern the State by means of these Trublions, and he flattered them to draw them about him, whistling to them as

sweetly as a flute, after the guise of the fowler piping to little birds. And the good Tintinnabule fell into great amazement and affliction by reason of this piping and had a great fear lest Robin Honeyman should entice his goslings.

"Under Trublion, Tintinnabule and Robin Honeyman there held command over the Trublion troops:

"Four palmers of exceeding sourness.

"Twenty-one baptized Jews.

"Twenty-five worthy begging friars.

"Eight makers of almanacks.

"Forty demagogues, misoxenes, xenophobes, xenoctones and xenophages; and six bushels of noblemen professing devotion to the beauteous lady of Bourdes in Navarre.

"In this fashion did sundry and contrary chiefs govern the Trublions. They were a right unmannerly race, and even as the Harpies, as Virgil reports, sat upon trees and shrieked horribly, and spoiled all that lay beneath them, in like fashion these froward Trublions climbed upon the cornices and pinnacles of the churches and houses, thence to do despite to the courteous citizens, to drop filth upon them and to piss upon them.

"And they diligently chose an old colonel named Gelgopole, who was the most inept in war that could be found, an enemy of justice and a disdainer of the laws, and made of him their idol and paragon, and went about the city crying, 'Long life to the old Colonel!' And the little school-urchins likewise squealed at their heels,

'Long life to the old Colonel!' Then the aforesaid Trublions gathered together in many assemblies and conventicles in which they cried: 'Health to the old Colonel' with such loudness of voice that the elements themselves were astounded and the birds flying above their heads fell to earth benumbed and dead. In sooth this was a very base madness and a most horrible frenzy.

"Then the said Trublions proclaimed that he who would faithfully serve the city and merit the civic crown, which was fashioned of the leaves of the oak-tree bound with a fillet of wool and naught besides, and honourable among all crowns, should utter furious cries and insane discourses, likewise those that guided the plough, and those that reaped and gathered the harvest, and led their flocks to the pasture and grafted their pear-trees in this fair land of vine and corn, of green meadows and fruitful gardens, did not serve the State. Neither did their fellows that hewed the stone and builded in the cities and villages houses with roofs of red tiles and fine slate, nor the weavers, nor the glass-workers, nor the stone-cutters that laboured within the bowels of Cybele. Nor the wise men who laboured in their closed studies and spacious libraries knowing many wondrous secrets of Nature: nor the mothers giving milk unto their babes, nor the good old wives spinning with their distaffs in the chimney-corner, telling tales to the little children. But, said they, the Trublions served the State by braying like asses at a fair. And be it said for justice' sake that in so doing they thought to do

well, for they had naught but the clouds of their brains and the breath of their mouths for their own, and they expended their breath with great force for the public weal and common profit.

"And they cried not only 'Long life to the old Colonel!' but they also cried without respite that they loved the State. In which they grievously offended the other citizens, for thus they gave men to understand that those folk who shouted not did not love their mother the State nor the fair land of their birth, which was a manifest imposture and an injury not to be suffered, for men drink with their mother's milk this natural love and it is sweet to breathe one's natal air.

"Now there were living at this time in the city and country many wise and prudent men, who loved their city and republick with a dearer and purer love than ever the Trublions bare them.

"For the said wise men desired that their city should remain wise and virtuous as themselves, blooming with graces and virtues, bearing fitly in her right hand the golden rod of justice, and that their city should be glad, careful and free, and not (as the Trublions contrary-wise desired) bearing in her hands a great club wherewith to belabour the good citizens and a blessed chaplet to mutter *Aves*, and filthily and miserably subject to the old Colonel Gelgopole and the said Tintinnabule. For in sooth these latter wished her subject to monks, hypocrites, bigots, canting

rogues and impostors; lousy, filthy, frocked and hooded, shaven and barefoot; for devourers of crucifixes, bleaters of requiems, beggars, defrauders and cozeners of testaments swarmed in those days and had already by secret means acquired in houses and woods, fields and meadows well-nigh one third part of the land of France. And they diligently laboured (these Trublions) to render the city yet more rude and uncomely. For they conceived a great aversion to meditation and philosophy and all arguments deduced from upright feeling and shrewd reasoning, and all subtle thoughts, and condemned everything save force, only esteeming this latter because it was wholly brutish. Thus did the Trublions love their State and the country of their birth."

As he read this old French text, Monsieur Bergeret was careful not to sound all the letters with which it was bristling after the fashion of the Renaissance. He had a feeling for the beauty of his native language. He paid no attention to orthography, considering it a negligible thing: but he had, on the other hand, the greatest respect for the old pronunciation, so light and fluent, which in our days, unfortunately, is becoming heavier and more clumsy. Monsieur Bergeret read his text according to the traditional pronunciation, and in so doing restored their youth and novelty to the old words. Their meaning emerged

clear and limpid, causing Monsieur Goubin to remark:

"What I like about that passage is the style; it is so naïve."

"Do you think so?" said Monsieur Bergeret.

And he continued:

"And the Trublions said that they would defend the colonels and soldiers of the State and republick, which was mockery and derision, for the colonels and soldiers, who are armed with guns, muskets, artillery and other very terrible engines, are employed to defend and not to be defended by the unarmed citizens, and it did not seem possible that there were in the city folk fond enough to attack their own defenders, and the prudent men opposed to the Trublions asked only that the colonels should be honourably subject to the august and holy laws of the State and republick. But the said Trublions continued to shout and would hear nothing for that niggardly nature had deprived them of understanding.

"And the Trublions nourished a great hatred of foreign nations. The names alone of the said nations and peoples made their eyes stand out of their heads like those of cray-fish, very horrible to behold; they waved their arms like the sails of windmills, so that there was not among them a notary's clerk nor a butcher's 'prentice but wished to send a challenge to a king or queen or emperor of some great country, and the least hatmaker or taverner

made as though he were ready at any moment to go to the wars, but in the end he remained in his chamber.

"And as it is true that fools, who are ever greater in number than the wise, march to the sound of vain cymbals, so people of little knowledge and understanding (and there are many such among rich folk as well as among the poor) joined the company of the Trublions and were Trublions with them. And there was a horrible uproar in the State, so that the wise maiden Minerva, sitting in her temple, that she might not have her ear-drums broken by such bangers of saucepans and infuriated popinjays, filled her ears with the wax brought her by her well-beloved bees, thus giving her faithful ones, wise men, philosophers and good law-givers of the State, to understand that it were waste of time to enter into wise dispute and learned argument with these trublioning and tintinnabulating Trublions. And some persons in the realm, and not the least important, being astounded by this hurly-burly, perceived that these crazy loons were on the point of over-throwing the republick and over-turning the noble and glorious State, which would have been a most lamentable happening. But a day came when the Trublions burst asunder, for they were full of wind."

His reading finished, Monsieur Bergeret replaced the pamphlet upon the table.

"These old books," he said, "amuse and

divert our minds, they make us forget the present day."

"That is true," replied Monsieur Goubin.

But he smiled; a thing he seldom did.

CHAPTER IX

URING the holidays, Monsieur Mazure, a keeper of departmental archives, came for a few days to Paris to canvass the offices of the Ministry for the Cross of the Legion of Honour, to make certain historical researches among the National Archives, and to see the Moulin-Rouge. Before entering upon his labours, on the day after his arrival, he called, about six o'clock in the evening, upon Monsieur Bergeret, who welcomed him benevolently. As the heat of the day was overwhelming to those who were detained in the city, under the scorching roofs and in the streets filled with acrid dust, a bright idea occurred to Monsieur Bergeret. He took Monsieur Mazure to the Bois, to a *cabaret,* where tables were set out under the trees, by the brink of a slumbering sheet of water.

There, in the cool shade and the peace of the foliage, they enjoyed an excellent dinner, and exchanged views upon familiar topics, discoursing in turn upon learning and the divers fashions of

loving. Then, without preconcerted design, they yielded to an inevitable impulse and spoke of the Affair.

Monsieur Mazure was greatly perturbed by the Affair. Being both by persuasion and temperament a Jacobin and a patriot, after the manner of Barère and Saint-Just, he had joined the Nationalist hosts of his own department, and in company with Royalists and clerics, his *bêtes noires*, he had, in the superior interest of his country, uplifted his voice for the unity and indivisibility of the Republic. He had even become a member of the league of which Monsieur Panneton de La Barge was the president, and as this league had voted an address to the King it was slowly dawning upon him that it was anti-republican, and he no longer felt easy in respect of its principles. As a matter of fact, being accustomed to dealing with documents, and quite capable of bringing his intelligence to bear upon a critical inquiry of a fairly simple character, he experienced some difficulty in upholding a system that displayed an audacity hitherto unexampled in the fabrication and falsification of documents intended to ruin an innocent man. He felt that he was surrounded by imposture, and yet he would not admit the fact that he had made a mistake, such an admission being possible only to minds of unusual quality.

He protested, on the contrary, that he was right,

and it is only fair to admit that he was kept in ignorance, constrained, crushed and compressed by the compact mass of his fellow-citizens. The knowledge of the inquiry and the discussion of the documents had not yet reached his little town, comfortably situated on the green banks of a sluggish river. There, obstructing the light, filling public offices and sitting on the bench, was that host of politicians and churchmen, whom Monsieur Méline had formerly sheltered beneath the skirts of his provincial frock-coat, waxing prosperous in acquiescent ignorance of the truth. This elect society, which enlisted crime in the interests of patriotism and religion, made it respectable for all, even for the Radical-Socialist chemist Mandar.

The department was all the more safely protected against any revelation of the most notorious facts in that it was administered by an Israelitish prefect.

Monsieur Worms-Clavelin held himself bound, by the very fact that he was a Jew, to serve the interests of the anti-Semites of his administration with greater zeal than a Catholic prefect would have displayed in his place. With a prompt and sure hand he stifled in his department the growing faction in favour of revision. He favoured the leagues of the clerical agitators, causing them to prosper so wonderfully that citizens Francis de Pressensé, Jean Psichari, Octave Mirbeau and Pierre Quillard, who

came to the departmental capital to speak their minds as free men, felt as though they had stepped straight into a city of the sixteenth century. They encountered none but idolatrous papists, howling for their death, who wanted to massacre them. And as Monsieur Worms-Clavelin, who since the judgment of 1894 was fully convinced that Dreyfus was innocent, made no mystery of that conviction after dinner, as he smoked his cigar, the Nationalists whose cause he favoured had good reason to count on a loyal support which was not dependent upon personal feeling.

This firm hold over the department whose archives he kept profoundly impressed Monsieur Mazure, who was an ardent Jacobin and capable of heroism, but who, like the company of heroes, marched only to the sound of the drum. Monsieur Mazure was not a brute. He felt that he owed it to others and to himself to explain his attitude.

After the soup, as they were waiting for the trout, he leaned his arms on the table and remarked:

"My dear Bergeret, I am a patriot and a republican; I do not know whether Dreyfus is guilty or innocent. I do not want to know; it's not my business. He may be innocent, but there is no doubt that the Dreyfusites are guilty. They have been guilty of a great impertinence in substituting their own personal opinion for a decision given by repub-

lican justice. Besides, they have stirred up the whole country. Trade is suffering."

"There's a pretty woman," said Monsieur Bergeret, "tall, straight and slender as a young tree."

"Pooh!" said Monsieur Mazure. "A mere doll."

"You speak very frivolously," returned Monsieur Bergeret. "A doll, when alive, is a great force of Nature."

"I don't trouble my head about that woman or any other," said Monsieur Mazure. "Perhaps because my own wife is a very well-made woman."

So he said and did his best to believe. The truth was he had married the old servant and mistress of his two predecessors. Bourgeois society had kept aloof from her for ten years, but as soon as Monsieur Mazure joined the Nationalist leagues of the department she found herself received in the best society of the town. General Cartier de Chalmot's wife went about with her, and the wife of Colonel Despautères could hardly tear herself away from her.

"The reason why I attach special blame to the Dreyfusites," added Monsieur Mazure, "is that they have weakened our national defence and lowered our prestige in the eyes of other nations."

The sun was shedding his last crimson rays between the black tree-trunks. Monsieur Bergeret felt that he must in honesty reply:

"Just consider, my dear Mazure," he said, "that if the affairs of an obscure captain have become a matter of national importance the fault is not ours, but that of the ministers who erected the support of an erroneous and illogical sentence into a system of government. If the Keeper of the Seals had done his duty and proceeded to the revision of the trial as soon as it was clearly proved to be necessary, no one would have said anything. It was during this lamentable evasion of justice that protests began to make themselves heard. What upset the whole country, what is calculated to injure us abroad and at home, was that those in authority obstinately persisted in a monstrous piece of wickedness which increased day by day under the covering of lies with which they strove to hide it."

"What else would you expect?" said Monsieur Mazure. "I am a good patriot and a republican."

"Then since you are a republican," said Monsieur Bergeret, "you must feel an alien, a solitary, among your fellow-citizens. There are few republicans left in France to-day. The Republic herself has created none. It's absolute government that makes republicans. The love of liberty is sharpened on the grinding-stone of royalty or imperialism, but it grows blunt in a country where people believe they are free. People seldom care much for what they possess. Reality as a rule is not a very pleasant

thing. One needs wisdom to be content with it. We can safely say that to-day Frenchmen under fifty are not republicans."

"They are not monarchists."

"No, they are not monarchists either, for while as a rule men care little for what they have, because what they have is not usually pleasant, they fear change because it contains the Unknown. It is the Unknown that frightens them most; that is the source and fountain-head of all fear. You see that in universal suffrage, which would produce an incalculable effect but for this terror of the Unknown, which annihilates it. It contains a force which ought to perform prodigies of good or evil, but the fear of the change contained in the Unknown gives it power, and the monster bows his head to the yoke."

"Would the gentlemen care for a *pêche au marasquin?*" inquired the head waiter.

His voice was gentle and persuasive, and none of the occupied tables escaped his vigilant gaze. But Monsieur Bergeret did not reply; he was watching a lady who was advancing along the sandy path, wearing a Louis XIV "church-lamp" hat of rice-straw, covered with roses, and a white muslin gown, the body of which was loose and floating, drawn in at the waist by a pink sash. The ruche round her neck looked like the collar of wings enclosing the

face of an angel. Monsieur Bergeret recognized Madame de Gromance, whom he had more than once met, to his secret agitation, in the dull monotony of provincial streets. He saw that she was accompanied by a very smart young man, whose attitude was altogether too correct for him to appear anything but bored.

He stopped at the table next to that occupied by Monsieur Bergeret and his friend, when Madame de Gromance happened to glance round and see Monsieur Bergeret. An expression of displeasure came over her face, and she led her companion to the remotest corner of the lawn, where they sat down under the shade of a large tree. The sight of Madame de Gromance filled Monsieur Bergeret with that bitter-sweet feeling of which a pleasure-loving soul is conscious at the sight of the beauty of living forms.

He asked the head waiter whether he knew the lady and gentleman.

"I know them in a kind of way," replied the waiter. "They often come here, but I don't know their names. We see so many people! On Saturday the place was crowded. There were covers all over the grass and under the trees, as far as the hedge that encloses the lawn."

"Really?" said Monsieur Bergeret. "There were covers under all those trees?"

"Yes, and on the terrace as well, and in the kiosk."

Busily cracking almonds, Monsieur Mazure had not noticed the muslin dress. He inquired which lady they were speaking of. Monsieur Bergeret, however, decided to keep Madame de Gromance's secret, and made no reply.

Night had fallen. Here and there a lamp whose radiance was softened by a shade of white or pink paper marked the position of a table and revealed shapes surrounded by faint haloes of light. Beneath one of these discreet lights the little white plume surmounting a straw hat was drawing closer and closer to the gleaming cranium of an elderly man. At the next table were two youthful faces, more unsubstantial than the moths that fluttered around them. Not in vain was the white round shape of the moon ascending the paling sky.

"I trust you are satisfied, gentlemen," said the head waiter.

And without waiting for a reply he directed his vigilant steps elsewhere.

"Look at those people dining in the kindly darkness," said Monsieur Bergeret with a smile. "Those little white plumes, and right at the back, under that great tree, those roses on a Louis Quatorze straw hat. They are eating, drinking and making love, and to this man they are nothing but covers! They have instincts and desires, even thoughts per-

haps, and they are covers! What strength of mind and of language! This knight of the appetite is a great man."

"We have had a very pleasant dinner," said Monsieur Mazure, rising. "This restaurant is frequented by the very smartest people."

"Their smartness," replied Monsieur Bergeret, "was possibly not of the highest category. But some of them, certainly, were graceful and charming enough. I must confess, however, that it gives me less pleasure to contemplate these fashionable folk since a vile conspiracy has aroused the sickly fanaticism and thoughtless cruelty of their poor little brains. The Affair has revealed the moral sickness with which our fashionable society is afflicted, just as the vaccine of Koch discovers the lesions of tuberculosis in an infected organism. Fortunately the depths of the human ocean lie beneath this gilded scum. But when will my country be delivered from ignorance and hatred?"

CHAPTER X

HE Baronne Jules, the widow of the great Baron and the mother of the little Baron, had lost, under circumstances which are familiar to us, her lover Raoul Marcien.* She was too tender-hearted to live alone, and it would have been a pity had she done so. It came to pass that one summer night, between the Bois and the Étoile, she took unto herself a new lover. It is fitting to record this fact, as it is not unconnected with public affairs.

The Baronne Jules de Bonmont, who had spent the month of June at Montil, on the banks of the Loire, was passing through Paris on her way to Gmunden. Her house being shut up, she dined at one of the restaurants in the Bois with her brother, Baron Wallstein, Monsieur and Madame de Gromance, Monsieur de Terremondre, and young Lacrisse, who like herself were passing through Paris.

As they all moved in good society they were all Nationalists, Baron Wallstein as much as any of

* See *The Amethyst Ring.*

them. An Austrian Jew, expelled from his country by the Viennese anti-Semites, he had settled in France, where he founded a well-known anti-Semite paper and took refuge in the friendship of the Church and the Army. Monsieur de Terremondre, a gentleman of the lesser nobility, and a small landowner, displayed just enough clerical and military enthusiasm to be able to identify himself with the superior territorial aristocracy with which he associated. The Gromances had too much interest in the return of the monarchy not to desire it seriously. Their financial situation was very precarious. Madame de Gromance, who was pretty, well-made, and mistress of her own actions, had so far kept free of the Affair, but her husband, who was no longer young, and was fast approaching the age when a man feels the need of comfort, security and consideration, sighed for better days and impatiently awaited the advent of the King. He was confident that he would be created a peer of France by the restored Philippe. He based his right to a seat in the Luxembourg on his loyalty to the Throne, and entered the ranks of Monsieur Méline's republicans, whom the King, if he wished to secure them, would have to reward. Young Lacrisse was secretary to the league of the Royalist youth of the department in which the Baronne had estates and the Gromances creditors. Seated at the little table under the trees,

lit by candles whose pink shades were surrounded by swooping moths, these five felt that they were united by a single idea, which Joseph Lacrisse happily expressed by saying:

"France must be saved."

It was the day of vast projects and stupendous hopes. They had, it is true, lost President Faure and the Minister Méline, who—the former strutting in dress-coat and pumps, the latter in a frock-coat made by a village tailor, taking short steps in his heavy hob-nailed shoes—were leading the Republic and Justice to their downfall. Méline had left the Government and Faure had left the world of the living at the very height of the banquet. It must also be recognized that the obsequies of the latter had not produced all that was expected of them, and that the *coup* they had hoped to bring off at the lying-in-state had proved abortive. It was also true that after smashing President Loubet's hat the gentry of the cornflower and the white carnation had received their chastisement at the hands of the Socialists. It is true that a Republican Ministry was formed, and obtained a majority. But in the ranks of the reactionary party were the clergy, the magistracy, the army, the landed gentry, industry, commerce, part of the Chamber, and almost the whole of the Press. And as young Lacrisse remarked, if the Keeper of the Seals had taken it into

his head to order a search to be made at the headquarters of the Royalist and Anti-Jewish Committees they would not have found one police commissary in the whole of France to seize the compromising documents.

"Anyhow," said Monsieur de Terremondre, "poor Monsieur Faure was of great service to us."

"He loved the army," sighed Madame de Bonmont.

"Assuredly," continued Monsieur de Terremondre. "And then by his display he prepared people for the monarchy. Coming after him, the King will not seem to be a burden upon the people; his establishment will not seem ridiculous."

Madame de Bonmont was anxious to be assured that the King would enter Paris in a coach drawn by six white horses.

"One day last summer," continued Monsieur de Terremondre, "as I was walking down the Rue Lafayette, I found all the traffic stopped, with groups of police here and there, and the pavements lined with people. I asked a citizen what this meant, and he solemnly replied that they had been waiting an hour for the President, who was returning to the Élysée after a visit to Saint-Denis. I looked at the respectful idlers and at the well-to-do people, who, with little parcels in their hands, were sitting quiet and watchful in their waiting fiacres,

deferentially losing their trains. I was pleased to note that all these people adapted themselves so easily to the customs of a monarchy, and that the Parisians were quite ready to welcome their sovereign."

"The city of Paris is no longer republican. All is going well," said Joseph Lacrisse.

"So much the better," remarked Madame de Bonmont.

"Does your father share your hopes?" said Monsieur de Gromance of the youthful secretary of the Young Royalists.

As a matter of fact, the opinion of Maître Lacrisse, advocate to the Church authorities, was not to be despised. Maître Lacrisse was working with the Headquarters Staff and preparing for the Rennes trial. He had to go through the depositions of the generals and get them to repeat their evidence. A Nationalist, and one of the leading lights of the Bar, he was, however suspected of having little confidence in the issue of the Monarchist plots. The old man had worked in former days for the Comte de Chambord and the Comte de Paris, and he knew from experience that the Republic would not easily be ousted, and that she was not so docile as she appeared. He had no faith in the Senate, and as he made money at the Palais he resigned himself willingly enough to living in France under a kingless

monarchy. He did not share the hopes of his son Joseph, but was too indulgent to condemn the ardour of enthusiastic youth.

"My father," replied Joseph Lacrisse, "has his own work; I have mine; but our efforts are convergent." And leaning towards Madame de Bonmont he whispered, "We shall strike our blow during the Rennes trial."

"May God help you," said Madame de Gromance, with a pious sigh. "It is time, if we want to save France."

It was very hot and they ate their ices in silence. Then the conversation languidly revived. It progressed fitfully, consisting of commonplace remarks and private observations. Madame de Gromance and Madame de Bonmont discussed clothes.

"There is a hint this year of pleated skirts coming into fashion," said Madame de Gromance, with inward satisfaction as she pictured the plump proportions of the Baronne in a full skirt.

"You would never guess," said Gromance, "where I went to-day. I went to the Senate. They were not sitting, and Laprat-Teulet took me all over the building. I saw everything—the hall, the gallery of Busts, the library. It is a very fine building."

What he did not tell them was that, in the semicircle where the peers were to sit when the King came to his own once more, he had felt the velvet

chairs and chosen his place in the centre. And before he went out he had asked Laprat-Teulet where the treasury was. This visit to the palace of the future peers had revived his covetousness. He repeated with heartfelt and sincere conviction:

"We must save France, Monsieur Lacrisse, we must save France, and it will only be in the nick of time."

Lacrisse would see to that. He displayed much confidence and affected great discretion. According to him, everything was in readiness. They would no doubt be forced to smash Worms-Clavelin's head for him and perhaps do the same for two or three more of the Dreyfusites of the department. And he added, swallowing a piece of crystallized peach:

"It's bound to come."

Then Baron Wallstein spoke. He spoke at length; he made them realize his knowledge of affairs; he gave them advice, and related a few stories from Vienna which greatly amused him. Then, in conclusion:

"It is all very satisfactory," he said, with his irrepressible German accent; "it is all very satisfactory, but you must admit that your *coup* at President Faure's funeral was a failure. If I speak like this it is because I am your friend. One owes the truth to one's friends. Do not make a second mistake, because in that case you would lose your following."

He looked at his watch, and seeing that he had barely time to get to the Opera before the close of the performance, lighted a cigar and rose from the table.

The position of Joseph Lacrisse demanded discretion; he was a conspirator. But he loved to display his power, to reveal the consideration in which he was held. He took from his pocket a blue morocco letter-case, which he carried against his breast, and drew from it a letter which he handed to Madame de Bonmont, saying with a smile:

"They can search my flat if they like; I carry all my documents about me."

Madame de Bonmont took the letter, read it in a whisper, and, flushing with respect and emotion, returned it with a hand that trembled slightly to Joseph Lacrisse. And when the august letter, returned to its blue morocco case, once more resumed its place next the secretary's heart, the Baronne gazed at his left breast with a lingering expression at once tearful and filled with fire. In her eyes young Lacrisse had suddenly become resplendent with romantic beauty.

The diners who still lingered under the trees of the restaurant began to feel the dampness and the chill of the night. The pink lights gleaming on the flowers and glass flickered out one by one on the deserted tables. At the request of Madame de Gromance and the Baronne, Joseph Lacrisse for the

second time drew the royal letter from his letter-case and read in a low but distinct voice:

"My dear Joseph,

"I am greatly delighted by the patriotic enthusiasm which our friends are displaying, thanks to your efforts. I have seen G. D., who seemed to me to be excellently well disposed towards us.

"Cordially yours,

"Philippe."

After reading the note Lacrisse replaced the sheet of paper in his blue morocco letter-case against his heart, beneath the white carnation in his buttonhole. Monsieur de Gromance murmured a few words of approval:

"Very nice indeed. Those are the words of a real leader, a true king.

"That is my feeling," said Joseph Lacrisse. "It is a pleasure to execute the orders of such a master."

"And the style is excellently concise," continued Monsieur de Gromance. "The Duc d'Orléans certainly seems to have inherited the secret of the Comte de Chambord's epistolary style. Of course you know, mesdames, that the Comte de Chambord wrote the most beautiful letters imaginable. A most able writer. That is really the truth. He excelled above all in letter-writing. There is a trace of his grand manner in the note which Monsieur Lacrisse

has just read to us. And the Duc d'Orléans has more enthusiasm; he has the fiery energy of youth. A fine figure of a man, a fine soldierly figure, and French to the backbone! He has a fascinating personality. I have been assured that in the working-class districts of Paris he is almost a popular favourite; he is known under the nickname of 'Gamelle.' *

"His cause has made great progress among the masses," said Lacrisse. "The little brooches with the King's head, of which we have distributed enormous quantities, are beginning to show themselves in the factories and workshops. The populace has more common sense than is commonly supposed. We are within reach of success."

In a benevolent and authoritative tone Monsieur de Gromance continued:

"With zeal, prudence and devotion such as yours, Monsieur Lacrisse, any hopes are permissible, and I am sure you will not have to sacrifice many victims in order to obtain success. Your opponents will flock over to you of their own accord."

His attitude as a supporter of the Republic, while not preventing him from expressing a desire for the restoration of the monarchy, did not permit him to express a too open approval of the violent methods which young Lacrisse had indicated at dessert.

* *Gamelle* might be roughly translated by "Matey."

Monsieur de Gromance, who went to balls given at the Prefecture and was carrying on a flirtation with Madame Worms-Clavelin, tactfully remained silent when the young secretary enlarged upon the necessity of doing for the "sheeny" prefect; but it was no breach of good taste on his part to praise the Prince's letter as it deserved, and to give them all to understand that he was ready for any sacrifice to save his country.

Monsieur de Terremondre was no less patriotic and no less appreciative of Philippe's epistolary style; but he was such an enthusiastic collector of curios and autographs that all he could think of was how he could get Lacrisse to give him the Prince's letter, either in exchange for something else or as a free gift or a so-called loan. By such methods he had got hold of several letters written by people mixed up in the Dreyfus affair and had formed an interesting collection. Now he was thinking of writing a pamphlet on the Monarchist Plot and putting in the Prince's letter as the principal feature. He realized that it would be difficult to obtain and his mind was full of the matter.

"Come and see me, Monsieur Lacrisse," he said. "Come and see me at Neuilly, where I shall be for the next few days. I will show you some interesting documents and we will speak again of that letter."

Madame de Gromance had listened with proper

attention to the King's epistle. She was a woman of the world, and too well versed in its ways not to know what was due to royalty. She had bowed her head on hearing the words of Philippe as she would have bowed to the King's carriage if she had had the honour of seeing it pass. But she was wanting in enthusiasm and had no feeling of veneration. She knew all about princes and had been as intimate as it is possible to be with a relation of the Duc d'Orléans. This had occurred in an unobtrusive little house in the Champs-Élysées district, one afternoon. They had said all that they had to say, and the occasion had not had a sequel. Monseigneur had been pleasant but not at all magnificent. Of course she felt honoured, but she had never regarded the honour as either very special or very extraordinary. She respected princes; occasionally she loved them; but she did not dream about them, and the letter left her quite unmoved. As for young Lacrisse, the sympathy which she felt for him was neither ardent nor tumultuous. She understood and approved of this fair-haired young man. He was small, slender and agreeable enough, though he was not rich. He was doing his very utmost to profit by the Affair and acquire importance. She, too, knew by experience that it is not easy to live in Society if one is poor. They were both working to keep their footing in Society. This was one

reason for a good understanding between them. They could help one another now and then. But that was all!

"I congratulate you, Monsieur Lacrisse," she said, "and you have my very best wishes."

How much more chivalrous and tender were the feelings of Baronne Jules! The gentle Viennese was interested heart and soul in this fashionable plot, of which the white carnation was the emblem. And she, too, was so fond of flowers! To be mixed up in an aristocratic plot in favour of the King was to her to enter into and luxuriate in the old French nobility, to be received in the most exclusive houses, and later on, perhaps, to go to Court. She was excited, pleased and agitated. Being affectionate rather than ambitious, her susceptible heart was touched by what she was pleased to consider the poetry of the Prince's letter. And the innocent woman spoke as she thought:

"Monsieur Lacrisse, that is a poetical letter."

"That is true," returned Lacrisse.

And a long look passed between them.

After this nothing further memorable was said as they sat in the summer's night before the flowers and candles of the little restaurant table.

The time came for them to go. As Monsieur Joseph Lacrisse placed her cloak round the Baronne's plump shoulders, she held out her hand

to Monsieur de Terremondre, who was saying good-bye. He was walking to Neuilly, where he was staying for the time being.

"It is quite near, only a quarter of a mile. I am sure, madame, that you don't know Neuilly. I have discovered, at Saint-James, the remnant of an old park, with a group by Lemoyne in a trellis-work arbour. I must show it to you some day."

And already his tall strongly-built figure was receding along the path that lay bathed in the blue moonlight.

The Baronne offered to give the Gromances a lift in the carriage which her brother Wallstein had sent for her from the club.

"Get in with me, there is plenty of room for three."

But the Gromances were people of discretion. They hailed a cab which had stopped outside the restaurant gates and got into it before she had time to stop them. She and Joseph Lacrisse were left standing alone by the open door of the carriage.

"Would you like a lift, Monsieur Lacrisse?"

"I am afraid I shall be in your way."

"Not in the least. Where shall I drop you?"

"At the Étoile."

They started along the blue road bordered by black foliage, in the silent night.

. . . . .

And the drive came to an end.

The Baronne asked as the carriage stopped, in the voice of one awakening from a dream:

"Where are we?"

"At the Étoile, alas!" replied Joseph Lacrisse.

And when he had left her, the Baronne, bowling along the Avenue Marceau, alone in the now chilly carriage, held a torn white carnation between her bare fingers. With half-closed eyes and parted lips, she still felt the eager yet gentle embrace which, pressing the royal letter against her bosom, had filled her with the sweetness of love and the pride of glory. She felt that this letter endowed her little private adventure with a national greatness and the majesty of the history of France.

CHAPTER XI

N a house in the Rue de Berri, at the back of the courtyard, there was a little entresol which was lit by a trickle of daylight as dismal as the stone walls between which it found its difficult way. Henry de Brécé, son of the Duc Jean de Brécé, president of the Executive Committee, was seated at his desk with a sheet of paper before him on which he was turning a round blot of ink into a balloon, by the addition of netting, ropes and a car. On the wall behind him was nailed a large photograph of the Prince, looking extremely feeble in his vulgar solemnity and heavy-witted youth. Tricoloured flags spangled with *fleurs de lis* surrounded the portrait. In the corners of the room banners were displayed on which loyal ladies had embroidered golden lilies and royalist mottoes. At the back of the room several cavalry sabres were fixed to the wainscot, with a cardboard scroll bearing the inscription: *"Vive l'armée!"* Below them, held in place by pins, was a caricature of Joseph Reinach as a gorilla. A chest for papers, a strong box, a

couch and four chairs and a writing-desk in some black wood composed the furniture of this room, which looked both comfortable and business-like. Propagandist pamphlets were piled in heaps against the walls.

Joseph Lacrisse, secretary of the Departmental Committee of Young Royalists, was standing by the fireplace silently conning the list of affiliated members. Henri Léon, vice-president of the Royalist Committees of the South-West, was seated astride a chair, where, with stony gaze and knitted brows, he was unfolding his ideas. He was considered irrelevant and gloomy, a regular skeleton at the feast, but his inherited financial abilities made him of value to his associates. He was the son of that Léon-Léon, the banker of the Spanish Bourbons, who had come to grief in the smash of the *Union générale*.

"We are being hemmed in, I don't care what you say, we are being hemmed in, I feel it. Day by day the circle is closing upon us. When Méline was with us we had air and space, as much space as we wanted. We were free to do as we liked."

He jerked his elbows and moved his arms about as though to demonstrate the ease with which people manœuvred in those happy days which were no more. He continued:

"With Méline we had everything. We Royalists

held the Government, the army, the magistracy, the administrations and the police."

"We still have all that," said Henri de Brécé, "and public opinion is more than ever with us now that the Government is so unpopular."

"It's no longer the same thing. With Méline we were pseudo-official, we were supporters of the Government, we were Conservatives; the conditions were ideal for conspiracy. Don't make any mistake about that. France as a whole is conservative, and domestic and changes alarm her. Méline did us the enormous service of making us appear reassuring; we appeared to be kindly and benign, as benign as he himself appeared. He told the people that we were the true Republicans, and the people believed him. You had only to look into his face; you couldn't suspect him of a jest. Through him we were accepted by public opinion, and that in itself is no small service."

"Méline was a good sort," sighed Henri de Brécé, "We must at least do him that justice."

"He was a patriot," said Joseph Lacrisse.

"With such a minister," continued Henri Léon, "we had everything, we were everything and we could do everything. We had no need to conceal ourselves. We were not outside the Republic; we were above it, and we dominated it from the full height of our patriotism. We were everything; we

were France herself! I must admit that the Republic is good enough at times, though I'm not smitten with the hussy. Under Méline the police—I don't exaggerate—were exquisitely agreeable. During a Royalist demonstration which you very kindly organized, Brécé, I yelled *'Vive la police'* till I was hoarse! And I meant it. The enthusiasm with which they clubbed the Republicans! Gerault-Richard was put in gaol for shouting *'Vive la République!'* Ah, Méline spoiled us, made life too pleasant for us. A wet-nurse, positively! He rocked us to sleep. That's a fact. General Decuir himself used to say, 'Now that we've got all we can possibly want, what's 'the good of upsetting the whole caboodle and getting a nasty spill in doing it?' Thrice-happy days when Méline led the dance! Nationalists, Monarchists, anti-Semites and Plebiscitarians, we all danced in unison to the sound of his rustic fiddle.

"We were all countrified and content. When Dupuy came along I was less pleased; with him things were not so honest and above-board; we were not so sure of ourselves. Of course he didn't want to harm us, but he was not a true friend. He was not the kindly village fiddler leading the wedding procession. He was a fat coachman jogging us along in his cab. And we tore along, hanging on anyhow, always in danger of being upset. He had

a hard hand on the reins. You will be telling me that his clumsiness was feigned; yes, but feigned clumsiness is tremendously like the real thing. Besides, he never knew where he wanted to go. There are people like that, fellows who don't know your address but drive you indefinitely along impossible roads, winking maliciously as they do it. It unnerves one."

"I don't defend Dupuy," said Henri de Brécé.

"I don't attack him. I watch him, study him and classify him. I don't dislike him; he's been of great service to us. Don't forget it. If it were not for him, we should all be doing time to-day. Oh yes, I mean it. I'm referring to Faure's funeral, the great day fixed for simultaneous action. Well, my dear friends, after the failure of the great *coup* we should have been done for, had it not been for Dupuy."

"It wasn't us he wanted to spare," said Joseph Lacrisse, with his nose in his ledger.

"I know that. He saw at a glance that he couldn't do anything because there were some generals mixed up in the business. It was too big for him. But that doesn't alter the fact that we owe him a jolly big candle." *

* A reference to the practice of burning candles to induce the Virgin, or a Saint, to listen to a prayer, or in token of gratitude for a prayer granted.

"Bah!" said Henri de Brécé. "We should have been acquitted, like Déroulède."

"It's possible, but Dupuy allowed us plenty of time to pull ourselves together after the funeral stampede, and I confess I am grateful to him for that. On the other hand, without ill will, possibly without intending it, he has done us a great deal of harm. Suddenly, just when we least expected such a thing, he appeared to be furiously angry with us. He made out that he was defending the Republic. His position demanded the attitude; I recognize that. It wasn't a serious matter, but it had a bad effect. I get tired of telling you the same thing; that this country is conservative at heart. Unlike Méline, Dupuy did not tell people that we were the Republicans, that we were the Conservatives; for that matter, no one would have believed him if he had. During his ministry we lost something of our authority over the country. We were no longer on the side of the government. We were no longer reassuring; professional Republicans began to feel anxious about us. That was to our credit, but it was dangerous. Our position was not so good under Dupuy as under Méline, and it is worse today, under Waldeck-Rousseau, than it was under Dupuy. That's the truth, the bitter truth."

"Of course," said Henri de Brécé, pulling his moustache, "of course the Waldeck-Millerand Min-

istry is actuated by the worst intentions, but I repeat it's unpopular and it won't last."

"It may be unpopular," returned Henri Léon, "but are you quite sure it won't last long enough to do us harm? Unpopular governments last as long as popular ones. To begin with, no government is ever really popular. To govern is to displease. We are among ourselves and there is no need to mince matters. Do you for one moment imagine that we shall be popular when we form the government? Do you imagine, Brécé, that the people will weep with emotion when they see you attired as king's chamberlain with a key hanging down your back? And you, Lacrisse, do you suppose you'll be cheered in the working-class districts during a strike, when you are, say, prefect of police? Look at yourself in the glass and then tell me whether you look like an idol of the people. Don't let us deceive ourselves. We say that the Waldeck-Millerand Cabinet is composed of idiots; we are quite right to say so, but we should be wrong to believe it."

"What ought to encourage us," said Joseph Lacrisse, "is the weakness of a government which cannot enforce obedience."

"All our governments have been weak for many a long year," said Henri Léon, "but they have always been strong enough to defeat us."

"The Waldeck Ministry has not a single police-

commissary at its disposal," said Joseph Lacrisse. "Not one!"

"So much the better for us," said Henri Léon, "for one would be enough to jug all three of us. I tell you the circle is closing in. Consider these words of a philosopher; they are worth the trouble: 'Republicans govern badly, but they defend themselves well.' "

But Henri de Brécé, bending over his desk, was turning a second blot of ink into a beetle by the addition of a head, two antennæ and six legs. He gave a satisfied glance at his work, looked up and remarked:

"We still hold trump cards, the Army, the Church——"

Henri Léon interrupted him:

"The Army, the Church, the magistracy, the bourgeoisie, the butcher boys—in other words, the whole excursion train of the Republic. The train is travelling nevertheless, and will continue to do so until the driver stops the engine."

"Ah," sighed Joseph Lacrisse, "if only we had President Faure with us still."

"Félix Faure," resumed Henri Léon, "joined us out of sheer vanity. He became a Nationalist in order to get invitations to hunt with the Brécés, but he would have turned against us as soon as he saw us on the verge of success. It was not in his interest

to restore the monarchy. *Dame!* What could the monarchy have offered him? We could not have offered him a Lord High Constable's bâton. We may regret him, for he loved the army; we may mourn him, but we must not allow ourselves to be inconsolable. He was not the driver; Loubet is not the driver either; the President of the Republic, whoever he may be, is never master of his engine. To me the ghastly part of it is that the Republican train is controlled by a phantom driver. He is invisible, and yet the train rushes on. It positively frightens me.

"Then there is another thing," he continued, "and that is the general indifference of the public. Speaking of that, reminds me of a very significant remark once made by Citizen Bissolo. It was when the anti-Semites and ourselves were organizing spontaneous manifestations against Loubet. Our crowds went down the boulevards shouting 'Panama! Resign! Long live the Army!' It was magnificent. Young Ponthieu and General Decuir's two sons headed the crowd, with glossy silk hats, white carnations in their buttonholes, and gold-headed canes in their hands. And the toughest hooligans of Paris made up the procession. We had seen to that, and as it was a case of good pay and no risk we had our pick. They would have been sorry to miss

such a lark. Lord! what voices they had, and what fists, and what cudgels!

"A counter-manifestation quickly made its appearance; a smaller and more insignificant crowd, though warlike and determined enough, advanced to meet us amid shouts of 'Long live the Republic! Down with the priests!' with an occasional solitary cry for Loubet that seemed surprised to find itself in the air. Before it was over this unexpected disturbance aroused the anger of the police, who at that moment were barricading the boulevard and looking just like an austere border of black wool on a brightly variegated carpet. Soon, however, this black border, actuated by a movement of its own, hurled itself upon the van of the counter-manifestation, while another body of police harassed them from the rear. In this way the police had soon dispersed the partisans of Monsieur Loubet, dragging the unrecognizable débris off to the insidious depths of the Drouot police-station. That was the way they did things in those troublous times. Was Monsieur Loubet, at the Élysée, ignorant of the methods employed by his police for enforcing in the streets of Paris respect for the head of the State? Or, if he knew of them, was he unable and unwilling to alter them? I do not know. Did he realize that his unpopularity, real and undoubted as it was, was fading into insignificance, almost dis-

appearing in fact, before the strange and agreeable spectacle which was offered nightly to a witty and intelligent people? I do not think so, for in that case the man would have been a terrifying person; he would have been a genius, and I should no longer feel confident of sleeping outside the King's door at the Élysée this winter. No, I believe Loubet was once again so fortunate as to be unable to do anything. Anyhow, it is certain that the police, who acted spontaneously and solely out of the goodness of their hearts, succeeded, by their sympathetic repression, in shedding over the advent of the President a little of that popular rejoicing which had been totally lacking. In so doing, if one considers the matter, they did us more harm than good, for they pleased the public, while it was to our advantage that the general discontent should increase.

"However, one night, one of the last of that eventful week, when the expected manœuvre was taking place from point to point, and the counter-manifestation found itself attacked simultaneously in the van and in the rear by the police and in flank by us, I saw Bissolo extricate himself from the menaced van of the Republicans and, with long strides and a desperate wriggling of his little body, reach the corner of the Rue Drouot, where I was standing with a dozen or so roughs who in response to my orders were shouting 'Panama! Resign!' It was

a nice quiet little corner! I beat time, and my men pronounced each syllable with great distinctness —'Pa-na-ma!' It was really done with taste. Bissolo took refuge between my legs. He feared me far less than the police; and he was right. For two years Citizen Bissolo and I had met face to face in all our manifestations: we had headed the processions at the beginning and end of every meeting. We had exchanged every imaginable sort of political insult: 'Hypocrite! Time-server! Forger! Traitor! Assassin! Outcast!' That sort of thing binds people together and creates a mutual sympathy. Besides, it pleased me to see a Socialist, almost a Libertarian, standing up for Loubet, who is in his own fashion a Moderate. I said to myself: 'The President must hate being acclaimed by Bissolo, a dwarf with a voice of thunder, who at all public meetings demands the nationalization of capital. Bourgeois that he is, the President would surely prefer a bourgeois like myself for a supporter. But he can feel in his pockets.' Panama! Panama! Resign! Resign! Long live the Army! Down with the Jews! Long live the King!

"All this made me treat Bissolo with courtesy. I had only to say 'Hullo, here's Bissolo," and my dozen costers would promptly have cut him in pieces, but that wouldn't have done any good. I said nothing. We were very quiet; we stood be-

side one another and watched the march past of Joubet's supporters driven to the police-station in the Rue Drouot. Most of them, having previously been clubbed, staggered along beside the police like so many drunkards. Among them was a Socialist deputy, a very handsome man with a big beard; his sleeves had been torn off; there was a young apprentice sobbing and crying 'Mother! Mother!' and the editor of some trashy daily with two black eyes and his nose streaming with blood. And the *Marseillaise!* 'Qu'un sang impur.' . . . I noticed one man who was far more respectable and far more sorry for himself than the rest. He looked like a professor, a serious, middle-aged man. He had evidently made an attempt to explain his point of view; he had tried subtle and persuasive arguments on the police. Otherwise the way in which they were kicking him in the back with their hobnailed boots and banging him with their fists was quite inexplicable. And as he was very tall, very thin, anything but strong, and weighed very little, he skipped about under these blows in the most ridiculous fashion. He displayed a comical tendency to make his escape upwards. His bare head had a most pitiable appearance. He had that submerged expression which comes over a short-sighted man when he has lost his glasses. His face expressed the infinite distress

of a being whose only contact with the outside world comes through sturdy fists and hobnailed boots.

"As this unfortunate prisoner passed us, Bissolo, although he was on hostile territory, could not help sighing and saying: 'It is a strange thing that Republicans should be so treated in a Republic.' I politely replied that it was in truth somewhat amusing. "No, Citizen Monarchist," replied Bissolo, 'it is not amusing, it is sad. But that is not the chief misfortune. The chief misfortune, I tell you, is the lethargy of the public.' Bissolo spoke these words with a confidence that did us both honour. I glanced at the crowd, and it is a fact that it seemed to me flabby and without energy. Now and then a cry rose from its depths like a firework let off by a child: 'Down with Loubet! Down with the thieves! Down with the Jews! Long live the Army!' And it seemed friendly enough towards the worthy police, but there was no electricity in the air—no storm brewing. Citizen Bissolo continued with melancholy philosophy: 'The great evil is the lethargy of the public. We Republicans, Socialists and Libertarians are suffering from it to-day. You Monarchists and Imperialists will suffer from it to-morrow, and will learn in your turn that you may lead a horse to the water but you can't make him drink. Republicans are arrested and no one stirs a finger; and when it is the turn of the Royalists to

be arrested, no one will stir a finger, you may be sure of that. The crowd will not stir an inch to deliver you, Monsieur Henri Léon, or your friend Monsieur Déroulède.'

"I must admit that by the light of these words I seemed to catch a glimpse of a profoundly dismal future flashing across my vision. Somewhat ostentatiously, however, I replied: 'Citizen Bissolo, there is nevertheless this difference between you and ourselves—that the crowd looks upon you as a mob of time-servers without love for your country, while we Monarchists and Imperialists enjoy the esteem of the public. We are popular.' Citizen Bissolo smiled pleasantly at this and remarked: 'Your horse is there, monseigneur, and you have only to mount her. But when you are on her back she will quietly lie down by the side of the road and will pitch you off. There is no sorrier jade anywhere, I warn you. Tell me which one of her riders has not had his back broken by popularity? In time of peril have the people ever been able to offer the least assistance to their idols? You Nationalists are not so popular as you profess, you and your candidate Gamelle are almost unknown to the general public. But if ever the mob enfolds you in its loving embrace, you will very quickly discover its stupendous impotence and cowardice.'

"I could not refrain from reproaching Bissolo

severely for calumniating the French public. He replied that he was a sociologist, that his Socialism was based on science, and that he had a little box at home filled with actual facts minutely classified, which enabled him to bring about a methodical revolution. And he added: 'Science, and not the people, possesses sovereign power. A stupidity repeated by thirty-six millions of mouths does not for that reason cease to be stupid. Majorities, as a general rule, display a superior capacity for servitude. Among the weak, weakness is multiplied in proportion to number. Mobs are always inert. They possess a little energy only when they are starving. I can prove to you that on the morning of the 10th of August, 1792, the people of Paris were still Royalists. I have been addressing public meetings for ten years and have had my share of hard blows. The education of the people has hardly commenced; that is the fact of the matter. In the brain of the working man, in the palace where the bourgeois carry their inept and brutal prejudices, there is a great cavity. That has got to be filled. We shall do it. It will take a long time. In the meanwhile it is better to have an empty head than one filled with toads and serpents. All this is scientific fact; it's all in my box. It is all in accordance with the laws of evolution. Nevertheless the general poltroonery disgusts me. And in your place it would frighten me. Look

at your partisans, the defenders of the sword and the Church, did you ever see anything so flabby, so gelatinous?' Having spoken, he stretched out his arms, gave a wild cry of 'Long live Socialism!' plunged head foremost in the enormous crowd, and disappeared in the sea of people."

Joseph Lacrisse, who had listened without enthusiasm to this long story, asked whether Citizen Bissolo wasn't merely an animal.

"On the contrary, he is a very clever man," replied Henri Léon, "the sort of man one would like to have as a neighbour in the country, as Bismarck used to say of Lassalle. Bissolo spoke only too truly when he said that you may lead a horse to the water, but you can't make him drink."

CHAPTER XII

MADAME DE BONMONT conceived of love as an abyss of delight. After that dinner at the Madrid, glorified as it had been by the reading of the royal letter, she had said to Joseph Lacrisse as they returned from the Bois, while the carriage was still warm with an historic embrace: "This will be for ever!" and these words, meaningless as they will seem if we consider the impermanence of the elements which make up the substance of the erotic emotions, were none the less indicative of a proper spirituality and of longing for the infinite which conferred a certain distinction. "Quite!" had been the answer of Joseph Lacrisse.

Two weeks had passed since that happy night, two weeks during which the secretary of the Departmental Committee of Young Royalists had divided his time between the demands of his work and those of his love. Dressed in a tailor-made costume, her face covered with a white lace veil, the Baronne had come, at the appointed hour, to the first-floor flat of a discreet little house in the Rue Lord-Byron,

Here were three rooms which she had herself furnished with a heart full of tenderness, hanging them with that celestial blue which had formerly figured in her forgotten love-affair with Raoul Marcien.

She found Joseph Lacrisse well-mannered, proud and even a little shy. He was young and charming, but not exactly what she had wanted. He was gloomy and seemed uneasy. With his frowning brows and thin tightly-closed lips he would have reminded her of Rara, had she not possessed to the full the delightful faculty of forgetting the past. She knew that if he was anxious it was not without cause. She knew that he was a conspirator and that it fell to his share to hoodwink the prefect and the chief Republicans of a very populous department; and she knew that in this enterprise he was risking his liberty and his life for the sake of King and Church. It was precisely because he was a conspirator that she had first loved him. But now she would have liked him to be more cheerful and more affectionate. He welcomed her warmly enough, however, saying:

"It is an intoxication to see you! For the last fortnight I have positively been walking in a starry dream." And he had added: "How delicious you are!"

But he hardly looked at her, and at once went to the window, where he lifted a corner of the cur-

tain, and for ten minutes remained there peering through the opening.

Then, without turning round, he remarked:

"I told you that we ought to have two exits, and you wouldn't believe me. It's a good thing we are in front anyhow, but I can't see properly because of the tree."

"The acacia?" sighed the Baronne as she slowly untied her veil.

The house stood back from the road, facing a little courtyard, containing an acacia and a dozen spindle-trees, shut in by an ivy-covered railing.

"Yes, the acacia, if you like."

"What are you looking at, *mon ami?*"

"At a man stuck against the wall opposite."

"Who is he?"

"I don't know. I'm looking to see if he is one of my detectives. I'm fed up. Since I've been in Paris I've had two of them at my heels all day. It gets on one's nerves in the end. But this time I quite thought I'd managed to give them the slip."

"Couldn't you complain?"

"To whom?"

"I don't know—to the Government."

He made no reply, but stood for awhile still watching. Then, having made sure that it was not one of his pursuers, his countenance cleared and he came over to her.

"How I love you! You are lovelier than ever. You are, truly, and I adore you. But what if they had put different men on to me this time! It's Dupuy who put them on my track. A tall fellow and a short one. The tall one wore black glasses and the short one had a nose like a parrot's beak and little bright eyes like a bird's that were always glancing sideways. I knew them well. They weren't much to be feared. They were always after me. When I went to the Club my friends would tell me as they came in, 'Lacrisse, I've just seen your two fellows at the door.' I used to send them out beer and cigars. Sometimes I would ask myself if Dupuy did not set them on me to protect me. He was brusque and queer and irritable, but a patriot all the same. He wasn't a bit like the men in power to-day. With them you've got to be on your guard. What if they've changed my detectives, the brutes!"

He went to the window again.

"No, it's only a coachman smoking his pipe. I didn't notice his yellow-striped waistcoat. Fear distorts objects, that certain! I must confess I was afraid—on your account, as you may imagine. You must not be compromised through me, you who are so charming, so delicious!"

He sat beside her and took her in his arms, covering her with vehement caresses. Presently she found that her dress was in such disorder that mod-

esty alone, in the absence of any other motive, would have forced her to remove it.

"Elisabeth, tell me you love me."

"If I did not love you, it seems to me——"

"Do you hear that heavy, regular footfall in the street?"

"No, *mon ami.*

And it was true; plunged into a delicious oblivion she was not listening for sounds from the outer world.

"There's no doubt this time, it's he, my man, the little one, the bird. I know his step so well that I could pick it out among a thousand."

And he returned to the window.

These alarms set his nerves on edge. Since the failure of the 28th of February he had lost his admirable assurance and was beginning to anticipate a long and difficult affair. Most of his companions were growing discouraged and he himself suspicious. Everything irritated him.

And now she made an unfortunate remark:

"Don't forget, *mon ami,* that I've got you an invitation to dinner to-morrow at my brother's. It will be an opportunity of meeting."

His irritation burst forth:

"Your brother Wallstein! Ah, yes, let's talk of him! He's a true Jew if you like. This week Henri Léon told him about an interesting undertak-

ing, a propagandist newspaper which must be distributed gratuitously in large quantities throughout the country and in the manufacturing centres. He pretended not to understand what Léon was driving at and gave him advice—good advice! Does your brother imagine for a moment that it is his advice that we want?"

Elisabeth was an anti-Semite. She felt that she could not with decency defend her brother Wallstein, of Vienna, of whom she was exceedingly fond. She remained silent.

Lacrisse began to play with a small revolver which lay upon the table.

"If they attempt to arrest me here——" he said.

A fit of rage seized him. He cried out against the Jews, Protestants, Freemasons, Freethinkers, Parliamentarians, Republicans and Ministers. He would like to flog them in public, and bathe them in vitriol. He waxed eloquent and broke into the pious language of the *Croix*.

"The Jews and Freemasons are ruining France, ruining us, eating us up. But patience! Wait until after the Rennes trial, and then you will see how we will bleed them, split them up, smoke their hams, singe their hides and hang their heads in the pork-butchers' shops! Everything is ready. The movement will break out simultaneously in Rennes and in Paris. The Dreyfusards will be trampled in the

streets. Loubet will be roasted in the flames of the Élysée, and none too soon either."

Madame de Bonmont conceived of love as an abyss of delight. She did not hold it sufficient unto the day to forget the world once only in this room of sky-blue hangings. She sought to lead her lover back to gentler thoughts. So she said:

"What beautiful eyelashes you have!"

And she covered his eyelids with tiny kisses.

When she languidly opened her eyes again, languishing and recalling to her happy mind the infinity that had filled it for a moment, she noticed that Joseph was anxious and seemed far away from her, although she still held him with one of her soft, beautiful, supple arms. With a voice tender as a sigh, she asked him:

"What is the matter, *mon ami?* We were so happy just now."

"Of course we were," replied Joseph Lacrisse. "But I've just remembered three telegrams in cipher which have to be sent off before night. It is a complicated matter, and a dangerous one. We really thought for a moment that Dupuy had intercepted our telegrams on February 22nd. There was enough in them to jug the lot of us."

"But he did not intercept them, *mon ami?*"

"We must suppose not, as we were not molested. But I have my reasons for believing that for the

last fortnight the Government have had an eye on us, and until this wretched Republic is done for I shan't have a moment's peace."

Tender and radiant, she put her arms about his neck, like a scented garland of flowers, and gazing at him with her moist sapphire eyes she said, with a smile upon her fresh, ardent mouth:

"Do not be anxious, *mon ami.* Do not worry so. I am sure you will succeed. Their Republic is done for. How could it resist you? The people have had enough of Parliamentarians. They don't want any more of them, I'm certain. Nor of the Freemasons, and Freethinkers, and all those horrible godless people who have neither religion nor country. For one's country and one's religion are the same thing, aren't they? There is a wonderful spiritual impulse abroad. On Sunday, at Mass, the churches are full. And not only of women, as the Republicans would have us believe. There are gentlemen and officers. Believe me, *mon ami,* you will succeed. Besides, I will burn candles for you in St. Anthony's chapel."

"Yes, we shall make a move early in September," he replied, grave and thoughtful. "The public frame of mind is favourable. We have the good wishes and encouragement of the people. Oh, it is not sympathy we lack."

She imprudently inquired what they did lack.

"What we lack, or at any rate might lack, if things were not settled quickly, is the sinews of war—money, deuce take it! We get a good deal, of course, but we shall need so much. Three ladies in the best set gave us three hundred thousand francs. Monseigneur was much impressed by a generosity so truly French. Do you not think that there is something charming, exquisite, fragrant of the old France, the old aristocratic society, in the offering of these women to royalty?"

Madame de Bonmont, dressing in front of the glass, did not appear to have heard the question.

He explained his meaning:

"But they are trickling, trickling away, the three hundred thousand francs presented by those white hands. Monseigneur told us, with chivalrous grace: 'Spend the money to the last sou.' If some dainty little hand were to bring us another hundred thousand francs, how we should bless it! It would have helped to save France. There is still a place to be filled among the amazons of the cheque, in the squadron of fair Leaguers. I can safely promise to the fourth donor an autograph letter from the Prince and, what is more, a place at Court next winter."

But the Baronne, feeling that he was trying to bleed her, received a painful impression. This was not the first time, but she could not get used to it.

Besides, she did not see that it would be in any way useful to give her money for the restoration of the monarchy. Of course she liked the handsome young Prince with his rosy face and his fair silky beard. She wished ardently for his return; she was impatient to witness his entry into Paris, and his coronation. But, she argued, with his income of two millions he had no need of anything but love, good wishes and flowers. When Joseph Lacrisse had finished what he had to say the silence became painful.

"*Mon Dieu!* how awful my hair looks!" she muttered to the mirror.

When she had finished dressing, she took from her little purse a piece of four-leaved clover, enclosed in a glass medallion framed in silver gilt, and handing it to him whispered sentimentally:

"It will bring you luck. Promise to keep it always."

In order to divert the attention of any police-agents that might be on his track, Joseph Lacrisse was the first to leave the blue flat. As he reached the landing he muttered with a scowl:

"She's a regular Wallstein! It was no good *her* being baptized. What is bred in the bone will come out in the flesh!"

CHAPTER XIII

IN the warm luminous decline of day, the Luxembourg garden was as though bathed in a golden dust. Monsieur Bergeret sat on the terrace between Messieurs Denis and Goubin, at the foot of the statue of Marguerite d'Angoulême.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I should like to read you an article that appeared this morning in the *Figaro*. I shall not name the author, for I think you will recognize him for yourselves. Since chance will have it so, it gives me all the more pleasure to read it in the presence of this lovable woman who was a lover of sound doctrine and of open-hearted men, and who, because she was learned, sincere, tolerant and pitiful, and sought to deprive the torturers of their victims, raised against her all the monasteries and all the universities. They used even to incite the young scapegraces of the College of Navarre to insult her, and had she not been sister to the King of France they would have sewed her up in a sack and thrown her into the Seine. She was a gentle soul, profound yet cheerful. I cannot say whether

when alive she had the coquettish and mischievous expression which she wears in this statue by a little-known sculptor, by name Lescorné, but she certainly has not in the hard, sincere pencil drawings of Clouet's pupils, who have left us her portrait. I would rather believe that her smile was often veiled in sadness, and that her lips drooped sorrowfully when she said: 'I have borne more than my share of the burden common to all persons of high estate.' In her private life she was anything but happy, and all around her she saw the wicked triumph amid the applause of the cowardly and ignorant. I believe that in the days when her ears were not of marble she would have listened with sympathy to what I am about to read."

And Monsieur Bergeret, having unfolded his paper, read as follows:

"The Government.

"To see just where one stood in the Affair one needed, at the outset, some application, and a certain amount of critical method, together with sufficient leisure to apply it. So that we see that the light first dawned upon those who, by the quality of their minds and the nature of their occupation, were better adapted than others to the solution of difficult problems. After this, all that was needed was common sense and close attention. Common sense is enough to-day.

"We must not be surprised that the general public has held out so long against the obvious truth. Nothing should surprise us. There are reasons for everything, and it is our place to discover these reasons. In the present instance little reflection is needed in order to perceive that the public has been utterly and absolutely deceived, and its touching credulity abused. The Press has largely helped the lie to succeed. Most of the newspapers have hurried to the assistance of the forgers, and have published forged or falsified documents, insults and lies. But we must admit that in most cases this was done to please their public and respond to the private opinions of their readers. It is certain that the battle against truth was in the first place based on the popular instinct.

"The crowd, by which I mean the crowd of people who are incapable of thinking for themselves, did not understand; they could not understand. Their idea of the Army was a simple one. For them the Army was parade, march past, review, manœuvres, uniforms, high boots, spurs, epaulets, guns and flags. It also meant conscription, with beribboned caps, litres of cheap wine, barracks, drill, the mess, the guard-room and the canteen. It meant, again, a national trade in pictures, the brilliant little sketches of our military painters with their spotless uniforms and nice tidy battle scenes. And finally it was a symbol of strength and security, of honour and glory. The officers who rode past on horseback with their swords in their hands, amid the glitter of gold and steel, to the sound of music

and the roll of drums, how was it possible to believe that they would shortly be bending over a table, behind locked doors, *tête à tête* with anxious agents from the prefecture of police, handling the eraser and the india-rubber, handling the gum brush or sprinkling pounce, scratching out or putting in a name in a document, forging handwritings, to ruin an innocent man; or thinking out ridiculous disguises for mysterious appointments with the traitor they had to save?

"What made these crimes seem impossible to the public mind was that they did not smack of the open air, the early morning march, the field of manœuvres and the battle-field. They were all too stuffy, they savoured too much of the office; there was nothing military about them. And, in truth, all the practices which were resorted to in order to conceal the judicial error of 1895, all those infamous documents, all that vile and rascally trickery, reeks of the office, and a dirty office at that. All that the four green-papered walls, the china inkstand surrounded with sponge, the boxwood paper-knife, the water-bottle on the mantelpiece, the pigeon-holes, and the leather-seated chair could suggest in the way of ridiculous imaginings and evil thoughts to these stay-at-homes, these poor 'sitters' as a poet has called them, to vain, poor lazy, plotting scribblers, idle even in the accomplishment of their idle task, jealous of one another and proud of their occupation; all the equivocal, false, treacherous and stupid things that can be done with pen and paper in the service of wickedness and folly, came out of a corner of that

building on which are sculptured battle trophies and smoking hand-grenades.

"The jobs perpetrated in these offices during the space of four years, for the purpose of burdening a condemned prisoner with evidence which they had neglected to produce before his condemnation, and of acquitting the guilty man whom all accused, who inculpated himself, are so monstrous in their conception as to baffle the moderate mind of a Frenchman, and they exhale a spirit of tragic buffoonery most displeasing in a country whose literature abhors the confusion of styles. These documents and inquiries must be studied minutely before one can admit the reality of all these plots and intrigues, these prodigiously audacious tricks and inept manœuvres, and I can well understand that the careless, ill-informed public refused to believe in them even after they were divulged.

"And yet it is very true that at the end of a corridor in a Ministerial building, on thirty square yards of waxed flooring, a few military bureaucrats, some of them idle and crafty, others excited and unruly, betrayed justice and deceived a great people by their wicked, fraudulent documents. But if this Affair, which was above all the Affair of Mercier and the bureaux, has revealed a villainous morality, it has also raised up some noble characters.

"For even in this very office there was one man unlike the rest. His mind was broad, shrewd and lucid, his character noble, his heart patient, abundantly human and invincibly gentle. He was rightly looked upon as one of the most intelligent officers

in the Army. And although the singularity of a spirit of too rare an essence might have been a stumbling-block, he had been the first among the officers of his age to be appointed lieutenant-colonel, and everything foretold for him the most brilliant future in the Army. His friends understood his rather quizzical indulgence and his genuine kindliness. They knew him to be endowed with an unusual sense of beauty, apt to feel keenly all that was best in music and literature, and to live in the ethereal world of ideas. Like all men whose inner life is deep and meditative, he developed his great moral and intellectual faculties in solitude. This tendency to retire within himself, together with his natural simplicity, his spirit of renunciation and sacrifice, and the beautiful sincerity which sometimes seems to grace the minds of those most conscious of universal suffering and evil, combined to form in him the type of soldier known or dreamed of by Alfred de Vigny, the quiet hero of daily life who imparts some of his own nobility to the humblest tasks which he undertakes, and to whom the accomplishment of routine duty is the familiar poetry of life.

"This officer, who was appointed to the second committee of investigation, found one day that Dreyfus had been condemned for the crime of Esterhazy. He informed his superior officers. They tried, quietly at first, and then by threats, to put a stop to his investigations, which, in proving the innocence of Dreyfus, would reveal their own crimes and errors. He knew that it meant ruin if

he persevered. He persevered. With quiet reflection, slow and sure, with calm courage, he continued his work of justice. He was removed. He was sent to Gabès, and to the Tripoli frontier, on some wicked pretext, for no other reason than to get him murdered by the Arab brigands.

"Having failed to kill him, they set to work to dishonour him, to ruin him by the profusion of their slanders. With treacherous promises they tried to keep him from speaking at the Zola trial. He spoke, with the unruffled calm of the just man, with the serenity of a mind that knew neither fear nor desire. There was no exaggeration in his speech and no weakness; only the words of a man who was doing his duty on that day as on all other days, without thinking for a moment that there was a singular courage in the act. Neither threats nor persecution caused him to hesitate for a moment.

"Many have said that in order to accomplish the task which he had set himself, to establish the innocence of a Jew and the crime of a Christian, he had to get the better of clerical prejudices, to conquer a hatred of the Jews ingrained in him since his early youth, when he was growing to manhood in that land of Alsace and of France which gave him to the Army and the country. Those who know him best know that he heeded nothing of the kind, that he was incapable of any sort of fanaticism, that his ideals were never those of a sectary, that his great intelligence placed him above petty hatreds and partialities; in short, that his soul was free.

"This inward liberty, the most precious of all

liberties, his persecutors could not take from him. In the prison to which they sent him, whose stones, in the words of Fernand Gregh, formed the pedestal of his statue, he was free, freer than they. His wide reading, his calm, benevolent speech, and his letters, full of serene and noble thoughts, bear witness (I know) to the freedom of his soul. Those others, his persecutors and calumniators, were the real prisoners—the prisoners of their lies and their crimes. People who saw him behind the bolts and bars testify to the fact that he was quiet, smiling and indulgent. When the great mental revolution took place during which those public meetings that united thousands of scholars, students and workingmen were organized, while petitions covered with signatures demanded an end to the scandal of his imprisonment, he said to Louis Havet, who went to see him: 'I am much more easy in my mind than you.' I think, however, that he suffered. I think he suffered intensely at the thought of so much baseness and treachery, of so monstrous an injustice, of that epidemic of crime and madness, of the execrable fury of the men who were deceiving the crowd, and the pardonable fury of the ignorant mob. He, too, saw the aged woman bearing with saintly simplicity the faggots for the torture of the innocent. How could he do other than suffer, when he found that men were worse than his philosophy had pictured them, less courageous and less intelligent when put to the test than the psychologists imagined in their quiet studies? I believe he suffered inwardly in the secret places of his silent

soul, veiled as by the Stoic's cloak. But I should be ashamed to pity him. I should be too much afraid lest that murmur of human pity should reach his ears and offend the rightful pride of his heart. Far from pitying him, rather will I say that he was happy; happy because on the sudden day of trial he was ready and without weakness; happy because unforeseen circumstances permitted him to give to the full measure of his great soul; happy that he proved himself to be an honest man, heroic in his simplicity; happy because he stands for ever as an example to soldiers and to citizens. Pity is for those who have failed. To Colonel Picquart we can offer nothing less than admiration."

Having come to an end of his reading, Monsieur Bergeret refolded his newspaper. The statue of Marguerite of Navarre was all rosy-pink. In the west the harshly brilliant sky clothed itself as with a suit of mail, a network of clouds like bars of red copper.

CHAPTER XIV

HAT same evening Monsieur Bergeret received in his study a visit from his colleague Jumage.

Alphonse Jumage and Lucien Bergeret were born on the same day, at the same hour, and were the children of two girl friends to whom, from that time, they became an inexhaustible source of conversation. They had grown up together. Lucien never troubled his head in any way concerning their simultaneous entry into the world, but Alphonse was more mindful of the fact, and dwelt upon it with some emphasis. He formed a mental habit of comparing the course of their two lives, which had started simultaneously, and he gradually persuaded himself that it was only just, equitable and salutary that their progress in life should be equal.

He took a great interest in the development of their twin careers, both of which were devoted to teaching, and, judging his own fortune by another's, he created for himself continual and futile anxieties which obscured the natural clearness of his vision.

The fact that Monsieur Bergeret was a professor at the University, while he himself taught grammar in a suburban *lycée* was not, to his mind, in conformity with the idea of divine justice engraven upon his heart. He was too fair-minded a man to bear a grudge against his friend; but when the latter was appointed lecturer at the Sorbonne Jumage felt it keenly.

A curious effect of this comparative study of their two lives was that Jumage formed an inveterate habit of thinking and acting, on every possible occasion, in a manner diametrically opposed to Monsieur Bergeret's way of thinking and acting; not that he had not a sincere and upright character, but he could not help suspecting that some malign influence was at work to ensure the success of careers which were of greater importance and merit than his own, and were therefore unrighteous. And thus, when he found that the professor was in favour of the Revision, he at once joined the ranks of the Nationals, because he conceived all manner of perfectly genuine reasons for doing so, and also because he had to be the antithesis, in a sense, the inverted self, of Monsieur Bergeret. He entered his name as a member of the League of the *Agitation française,* and even made speeches at its meetings. In the same way he opposed his friend on every topic under the sun, from systems of economical heating

to the rules of Latin Grammar, and as, after all, Monsieur Bergeret was not always wrong, Jumage was not always right.

This contrariety, which with years had assumed the exactitude of a rational system, did not in any way interfere with their life-long friendship. Jumage was really concerned at the misfortunes that dogged Bergeret in the course of his sometimes troubled career. He went to see him every time he heard of a fresh calamity. He was no fair-weather friend.

On this particular occasion, he came to his old friend with the worried and bewildered expression, the look of mingled pain and pleasure, that Lucien knew so well.

"You are quite well, Lucien? I'm not in your way, am I?"

"No. I was reading the story of the porter and the young girls in *The Arabian Nights,* newly translated by Dr. Mardrus. It is a literal translation and very different from *The Arabian Nights* of our old friend Galland."

"I came to see you," said Jumage, "because I wanted to speak to you about something. But it's of no consequence. So you were reading *The Arabian Nights?*"

"Yes," replied Monsieur Bergeret, "and for the first time too. For the worthy Galland gives one no idea of the real thing. He is an excellent story

teller who has carefully corrected the morals of the Arabs. His Scheherazada, like Coypel's Esther, has her value; but here we have Arabia with all its perfumes."

"I've brought you an article to read," continued Jumage. "But, as I said before, it's of no consequence."

And he drew from his pocket a newspaper which Monsieur Bergeret slowly extended his hand to take. Jumage replaced it in his pocket. Monsieur Bergeret's hand dropped to his side; then, with fingers that trembled slightly, Jumage spread the paper on the table.

"Again, I repeat, it's of no importance, but I thought it better—perhaps it's better for you to know—you have enemies, many enemies."

"Flatterer!" said Monsieur Bergeret.

And picking up the paper he read the following lines marked in blue pencil:

"A common usher and a Dreyfussard, the intellectual Bergeret, who has been stagnating in the provinces, has just been appointed lecturer at the Sorbonne. The students of the faculty of letters have lodged an energetic protest against the appointment of this anti-French Protestant, and it does not surprise us to hear that many of them have decided to greet as he deserves, with howls of execration, the dirty German Jew whom the Min-

ister of Treason has had the impudence to foist upon them as a teacher."

And when Monsieur Bergeret had finished reading, Jumage said eagerly:

"Don't read it, it's not worth it. It's so trivial."

"Trivial, I admit," replied Monsieur Bergeret. "Yet you must not deprive me of this token, obscure and insufficient, but at the same time truthful and creditable, of what I did during a difficult period. I didn't do a great deal; but I ran some risks. Stapfer, the Dean, was suspended for having spoken of justice during a funeral oration, in the days when Monsieur Bourgeois was Grand Master of the University. And we have known worse times than those for which Monsieur Bourgeois was responsible. If it hadn't been for the generous firmness of my chiefs I should have been turned out of the University by an unwise Minister. I didn't think about it then, but I can think of it now, and claim the reward of my actions. Now tell me what more worthy, what nobler, what more finely austere reward could I attain than the insults of the enemies of justice? I could wish that the writer who, despite himself, has given me this testimonial, had expressed his thought in a more memorable fashion. But that would be asking too much."

Having thus spoken, Monsieur Bergeret placed the blade of his ivory paper-knife between the pages

of *The Arabian Nights*. He enjoyed cutting the pages of his books, being a wise man who suited his pleasures to his condition. The austere Jumage envied him this innocent pastime. He pulled his sleeve.

"Listen, Lucien. I share none of your opinions with regard to the Affair. I have blamed and still blame your conduct. I fear it may have the most deplorable results upon your future. No true Frenchman will ever find it in his heart to forgive you. I should like to say, however, that I most forcibly disapprove of the style of controversy employed against you by certain newspapers. I condemn them. You believe that, do you not?"

"Yes."

After a moment's silence, Jumage went on:

"You see, Lucien, you are slandered because of your position. You can summon your slanderers before a jury. But I don't advise you to do so. They would be acquitted."

"That is most probable," said Monsieur Bergeret. "Unless I walk into court in a plumed hat, a sword at my side, spurs on my boots, and an army of twenty thousand paid hooligans at my heels. Then my plea would be heard by judge and jury. When Zola was found guilty by the jury of the Seine in respect of the very moderate letter which he addressed to a President of the Republic who was ill-

prepared to read it, their deliberations took place amid bestial cries, hideous threats, and unendurable clatter of ironmongery, amid all the phantoms of error and untruth. I have not so terrific an apparatus at my disposal, therefore it is more than probable that my defamer would be acquitted."

"You cannot, however, remain indifferent to insults. What do you intend to do?"

"Nothing. I am satisfied. I would just as soon be subjected to the insults of the Press as to its praise. Truth has been served in the newspapers by her enemies as well as by her friends. When a mere handful of men, mindful of the honour of France, denounced the fraudulent condemnation of an innocent man, the Government and public opinion treated them as enemies. But they spoke out. And by their speech they proved themselves the stronger. You know how fervently the majority of the newspapers worked against them. But in spite of themselves they were serving the cause of truth, and by publishing the false documents——"

"There haven't been so many false documents as you think, Lucien."

"They made it possible to prove their falsity. Error had been scattered broadcast, and could no longer collect her scattered forces, and finally nothing was left save that which had sequence and continuity. Truth has a faculty of linking facts

together which error does not possess. It formed, in the face of insult and impotent hatred, a chain that could not again be broken. We owe the triumph of our cause to the liberty, the licence of the Press."

"But you are not victorious," cried Jumage. "Neither are we defeated! Quite the contrary! The opinion of the whole country is against you. I regret to say it, but you and your friends are unanimously execrated, dishonoured, spat upon. We defeated? You are joking. The whole of France is with us."

"And you are defeated from within. If I took appearances into consideration I might think you victorious, and despair of justice. There are criminals who go unpunished. Prevarication and perjury are publicly approved as praiseworthy actions. I have no hope that the enemies of truth will own themselves vanquished. Such an effort is possible only to the highest type of mind.

"There is very little change in the general state of mind. The ignorance of the public is still almost complete. There have been none of those sudden changes of opinion on the part of the crowd which are so amazing when they occur. Nothing striking or even noticeable has happened. Nevertheless the time is past when a President of the Republic could degrade, to the level of his own soul, justice, the

honour of the country, and the alliances of the Republic, the power of whose ministers depended upon their understanding with the enemies of the very institutions of which they were the guardians. A season of brutal hypocrisy when contempt for intelligence and hatred of justice were at one and the same time a popular opinion and a State doctrine. A time when those in power upheld the rioters, when it was a crime to cry *'Vive la République!'* Those days are already remote, as though they had sunk into the limbo of the past and were plunged into the darkness of the age of barbarism.

"They may return. We are divided from them as yet by nothing tangible, nothing apparent or definite. They have faded away like the clouds of the error which created them, and the least breath may yet rekindle their ashes. But even if everything were to conspire to strengthen your cause, you are none the less irretrievably lost. You are conquered from within, and that is the irretrievable defeat. When you are conquered from without, you can continue to resist and hope for revenge. Your ruin is within you. The necessary consequences of your crimes and your errors are at hand in spite of your efforts to prevent them, and with amazement you see the beginning of your downfall. Unjust and violent, you will be destroyed by your own injustice and violence. And the monstrous party of unright-

eousness, hitherto inviolable, respected and feared, is falling, breaking asunder of its own weight.

"What does it matter then if legal sanctions are dilatory or lacking? The only true and natural justice is contained in the very consequences of the act, not in external formulæ, which are often narrow and sometimes arbitrary. Why complain that the greatest culprits evade the law and retain their despicable honours? That doesn't matter either, under the present social system, any more than it mattered, in the days of the earth's infancy, when the great saurians of the primeval oceans were disappearing to make way for creatures more beautiful and of happier instincts, that there still remained stranded, on the slime of the beaches, a few monstrous survivors of a doomed race."

. . . . .

As Jumage reached the gate of the Luxembourg after his visit to his friend, he met young Goubin.

"I've just been to see Bergeret," he said. "I'm sorry for him; he seems very cast-down and dejected. The Affair has crushed him."

CHAPTER XV

T the offices of the Executive Committee in the Rue de Berri, Henri de Brécé, Joseph Lacrisse and Henri Léon were dealing with the business of the day.

"My dear President," said Joseph Lacrisse to Henri de Brécé. "I want you to find a prefecture for a good Royalist. I am sure you will not refuse when I have told you of my candidate's qualification. His father, Ferdinand Dellion, an iron-master at Valcombe, is in every way deserving of the King's favour. He is most careful of the moral and physical well-being of his workmen. He has a dispensary for them, and he sees that they go to Mass on Sundays and send their children to the church schools, and that they vote properly and abstain from trade unions. He is opposed, unfortunately, by the deputy Cothard and ill-supported by the sub-prefect of Valcombe. His son Gustave is one of the most active and energetic members of my Departmental Committee. He was most vigorous in the campaign against the Jews in our

city, and was arrested at Auteuil for taking part in the demonstration against Loubet. You simply cannot refuse a prefecture to Gustave Dellion, my dear President!"

"A prefecture," murmured Brécé, turning over his register, "a prefecture? We've only got Guéret and Draguignan left. Will you have Guéret?"

Joseph Lacrisse smiled imperceptibly as he replied:

"My dear President, Gustave Dellion is my collaborator. When the time is ripe he will proceed under my orders to the forcible suppression of Worms-Clavelin. It is only fair that he should take his place."

With his eyes glued to the register, Henri de Brécé declared the thing to be impossible. Worms-Clavelin's successor was already chosen. Monseigneur had appointed Jacques de Cadde, one of the first to subscribe to the Henry subscription-lists.

Lacrisse objected to Jacques de Cadde, saying that he was a stranger to the department. Henri de Brécé retorted that one did not dispute the King's orders, and the discussion was growing somewhat heated when Henri Léon, astride a chair, put out his hand and remarked in a peremptory tone:

"Worms-Clavelin's successor will be neither Jacques de Cadde nor Gustave Dellion. It will be Worms-Clavelin."

Lacrisse and Brécé protested.

"It will be Worms-Clavelin," repeated Henri Léon. "Worms-Clavelin, who will not await your arrival on the scenes to fly the royal standards from the roof of the prefecture, and whom the Minister of the Interior appointed by the King will have notified by telephone of his retention at the head of the departmental administration."

"Worms-Clavelin prefect under the monarchy!" said Brécé disdainfully. "I don't seem to see him."

"It would be a shocking thing, of course," replied Henri Léon. "But if the Chevalier de Clavelin is appointed prefect there is nothing more to be said. Don't let us have any illusions, the King won't bestow all the plums on us. Ingratitude is the first duty of a sovereign, and no Bourbon has ever yet been found lacking in that respect. I say this to the praise of the House of France.

"Do you really think the King will govern with the white carnation, the cornflower and the rose of France, and take his ministers from the Jockey Club and from Puteaux, or make Christiani Grand Master of the Ceremonies? If so, you are vastly mistaken. The rose of France, the cornflower and the white carnation will be left on the ground, in the modest shade beloved of the violet. Christiani will be set at liberty, nothing more. People will look askance at him for staving in Loubet's hat. Of course!

Once deposed, Loubet, who at present is nothing but a low Panamist, will be a predecessor when we have replaced him. The King will sit in his armchair at the Auteuil races and he will then consider that Christiani created a regrettable precedent and will bear him a grudge for doing so. Even we ourselves, we who are plotting for him, will become suspect; conspirators are not liked at Court. I am telling you this to save you from bitter disappointment. The secret of happiness is to live without illusions. As far as I am concerned, if my services are forgotten or despised, I shall not complain. Politics isn't a matter of sentiment; I realize only too well what His Majesty will be forced to do when we have set him upon the throne of his fathers. Before rewarding gratuitous devotion, a good King pays for the services which have been sold to him. Don't make any mistake about that! The greatest honours and the most lucrative positions will be given to the Republicans. The trimmers alone will form a third of our political personnel, and will receive their pay before we do. And that is only fair. Gromance, the old Chouan who went over to the Republic under Méline, explains his position very clearly when he tells us: 'You have lost me a seat in the Senate, therefore you owe me one in the House of Peers.' He'll get it, and after all he deserves it. But the reward of the trimmers will

be as nothing to that of the faithful Republicans who reserve their treachery for the supreme moment. Those are they who will get the portfolios and gold-laced coats, the titles and endowments. Do you know where to look for our Premier and half our Peerage at the present moment? Don't look for them in our Royalist Committees where we hourly run the risk of being arrested like so many thieves, nor in the wandering Court of our young and handsome Prince in his cruel exile. You will find them in the ante-chambers of the Radical ministers, in the drawing-rooms of the Elysée and in every institution in the pay of the Government. Have you never heard of Talleyrand and Fouché? Have you read no history, not even the works of Monsieur Imbert de Saint-Amand? It was not an *émigré* but a regicide who was appointed Minister of the Police by Louis XVIII in 1815. Our young King is certainly not so clever as Louis XVIII, but we must not think him devoid of intelligence. That would be disrespectful and, perhaps, too severe. When he is King he will realize the necessities of the situation. All the chiefs of the Republican party who are not slain, exiled, transported or incorruptible will have to be regarded, otherwise they will oppose him in a great and powerful party, and Méline himself will become a savage enemy. And since I have mentioned Méline, Brécé, tell me yourself, which would

be most advantageous to the royal cause—that your father should preside over the peers, or Méline, Duc de Remiremont, Prince des Voges, with the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, Knight of the Lily and Saint Louis? There can be no possible doubt. Duc Méline would bring far more adherents to the crown than the Duc de Brécé. Must I, then, teach you the A B C of restorations?

"All we shall get will be the titles and positions rejected by the Republicans. Our gratuitous devotion will be taken for granted. They will have no fear of displeasing us; they will feel assured that we shall remain inoffensive malcontents. It will never for a moment enter their heads that we might form an Opposition.

"Well, they will be mistaken. We shall be obliged to oppose them, and we shall do so. It will be profitable, and it won't be difficult. Of course we shall not ally ourselves with the Republicans. That would be in execrable taste, and our loyalty would forbid such a thing. We cannot be less Royalist than the King, but we can be more so. Monsiegneur le Duc d'Orléans is no democrat, we must do him that justice. He does not interest himself in the conditions of the working-classes. He dates from before the Revolution. Nevertheless, although he dines in knee-breeches and a Breton waistcoat, with all his orders round his neck, he will turn Liberal

when his ministers are Liberals. There is nothing to prevent us from becoming 'Ultras.' We shall pull to the right while the Republicans pull to the left; we shall become dangerous and they will treat us properly. And who can say whether the 'Ultras' will not be the means of saving the monarchy? We have already an incomparable army to-day which is more religious than the clergy. We have an incomparable bourgeoisie, anti-Semites every one of them, who think as men thought in the Middle Ages. Louis XVIII was not so fortunate. If they will give me the post of Minister of the Interior, with such admirable elements as these I'll guarantee to make the monarchy last ten years. After that it will be the turn of Socialism. But ten years is a good lease of life."

Having thus spoken, Henri Léon lit a cigar. Still harping on the same theme, Joseph Lacrisse begged Henri de Brécé to see if he had not a good prefecture to dispose of; but the President repeated as before that he had nothing but Guéret and Draguignan.

"It will have to be Draguignan then," said Joseph Lacrisse with a sigh. "Gustave Dellion will not be best pleased, but I must make him see it's a foot in the stirrup."

CHAPTER XVI

HE Baronne de Bonmont had invited all the titled landowners and the big manufacturers and financiers of the district to a charity fête which she was giving on the 29th of the month, in the famous Château de Montil which Bernard de Paves, Grand Master of Artillery in the reign of Louis XII, had built in 1508 for Nicolette de Vaucelles, his fourth wife, and which had been bought by Baron Jules after the French loan of 1871. She had been tactful enough to send no invitation to the Jewish landowners, although she had friends and relations among them. After the death of her husband she was baptized, and had now been five years naturalized. She was wholly devoted to her religion and country. Like her brother Wallstein, of Vienna, she was careful to distinguish herself from her former co-religionists by a sincere anti-Semitism. She was quite unambitious, however, and her natural inclination was for the pleasures of domestic life. She would have been satisfied with a modest position among the

Christian aristocracy of France, if her son had not urged her to "make a splash." It was the little Baron Ernest who had induced her to get in with the Brécés; it was he who had inscribed the entire aristocracy of the province on the list of the guests invited to the projected fête. It was he who brought the little Duchesse de Mausac to Montil to take part in the play. As she was given to remarking, she was of good enough birth to sup with circus-riders and drink with grooms.

The programme of the fête included a performance of *Joconde* by society amateurs, a fair in the park, a Venetian fête on the lake, and illuminations.

It was already the 17th. The preparations were proceeding hurriedly, amidst extreme confusion. The little company of actors were rehearsing their play in the long Renaissance gallery, the panels of whose ceiling bore, in an ingenious variety of design, the peacock of Bernard de Paves tied by the foot to the lute of Nicolette de Vaucelles.

Monsieur Germaine was accompanying the singers on the piano, while in the park the carpenters were putting together the framework of the booths with great blows of their mallets. Largillière, from the Opéra-Comique, was acting as stage manager.

"Your turn, Duchess."

Monsieur Germaine's hands, stripped of their

rings, excepting one that remained on his thumb, struck a chord.

"La, la."

But, taking the glass handed her by young Bonmont, the Duchess cried:

"Let me drink my cocktail first."

When she had finished, Largillière repeated:

"Come, Duchess."

"Tout me seconde,
Je l'ai prévu. . . ."

And Monsieur Germaine's hands, despoiled of gold and gems save for an amethyst on the thumb, once more struck a chord. But the Duchess did not sing. She was staring with interest at the accompanist.

"My dear Germaine, I am lost in admiration! You *have* grown a bust and hips! I congratulate you! You've really done something! While as for me—look!" She drew her hands down over her cloth costume. "I've got rid of all that!" She made a half-turn. "Nothing left! It's all gone! And in the meantime you've been growing them! Now that's really funny! But there's no harm in it. One thing makes up for another."

But René Chartier, who was playing Joconde, was standing motionless with his neck extended like a stove-pipe, thinking only of the velvet and pearls

of his voice, which was deep and just a little gloomy. He grew impatient at last, remarking coldly:

"We shall never be in time; it's deplorable!"

"Let us start from the quartette," said Largillière.

"Tout me seconde,
Je l'ai prévu;
Pauvre Joconde!
Il est vaincu."

"Come along, Monsieur Quatrebarbe."

Monsieur Gérard Quatrebarbe was the son of the diocesan architect. Since he had broken the windows of Mayer, the bootmaker, who was supposed to be a Jew, he was received everywhere in society. He had a good voice but he missed his cues, and René Chartier cast furious glances at him.

"You are not in your place, Duchess," said Largillière.

"No, I dare say not!" replied the Duchess.

René Chartier went up to young Bonmont and whispered in his ear:

"For goodness' sake don't give the Duchess any more cocktails, she will spoil everything."

Largillière was grumbling too; the choruses were confused and unimpressive. However, they attacked the trio.

"Monsieur Lacrisse, you are not in your place."

Joseph Lacrisse was not in his place, and it is only fair to say that it was not his fault. Madame

de Bonmont was perpetually enticing him into corners and murmuring to him:

"Tell me you love me still; if you don't still love me I feel I shall die!"

She also asked him for news of the plot, and as the latter was not going on at all well the question irritated him. He was annoyed with her, too, because she had not given any money to the cause. He strode off stiffly to join the chorus, while René Chartier sang as though he meant it:

"Dans un délire extrême
On veut fuir ce qu'on aime."

Young Bonmont went up to his mother.

"Don't trust Lacrisse, mother."

She started. Then, in a tone of affected indifference:

"What do you mean? He is very serious, more serious than is usual at his age. He is occupied with important matters. He——"

The young Baron shrugged his strong crooked shoulders.

"I tell you, don't trust him. He wants to come down on you for a hundred thousand francs. He asked me to help to get the cheque out of you. But at the present time I don't see that it's necessary. I am for the King, but a hundred thousand francs is a large sum."

René Chartier sang:

"On devient infidèle,
On court de belle en belle."

A servant brought the Baronne a letter. It was from the Brécés, who enclosed a contribution to the charity and expressed their regrets that they would not be able to attend the fête, being obliged to go away before the 29th.

She handed the letter to her son, who smiled unpleasantly, and asked:

"What about the Courtrais?"

"They refused yesterday, and Madame Cartier de Chalmot as well."

"The cats!"

"We shall have the Terremondres and the Gromances."

"The deuce, it's part of their business to come to our house."

They reviewed the situation; it was unsatisfactory. Terremondre had not, as usual, promised to hunt up his cousins and his aunts and all the rest of the small gentry. The big manufacturers themselves seemed to be hesitating and seeking excuses for not coming. Young Bonmont concluded:

"It's all up with your fête, mother! We are in quarantine, that's very evident."

These words grieved the gentle Elisabeth. Her beautiful face, always adorned by a loving smile, seemed overcast.

At the other end of the room, above the confused babel of sounds, Largillière's voice reiterated:

"Not like that! That's not the way! We shall never be ready in time."

"Do you hear?" said the Baronne. "He says we shall not be ready in time. Suppose we postpone the fête if it's not going to be a success."

"You are soft, mother! But I'm not blaming you. It's your nature. You are a forget-me-not and will always remain one. I am a fighting man, a strong man. I'm pretty well played out, as far as my health goes, but—I shall struggle on to the end."

"My child!"

"Don't let that worry you. I'm done for, but I shall struggle on."

René Chartier's voice flowed forth like a limpid fountain:

"On pense, on pense encore
A celle qu'on adore,
Et l'on revient toujours
A ses premières a . . ."

Suddenly the accompanist ceased playing amidst a great uproar. Monsieur Germaine was chasing the Duchess who was running off with his rings. She fled into the monumental fireplace, where on the Angevin slate were engraven the loves of the

nymphs and the metamorphoses of the gods. Then, pointing to a little pocket in her corsage she said:

"Here are your rings, my old Germaine. Come and fetch them. Look here! Here's a pair of Louis XIII tongs! You can use them!"

And she jangled an enormous pair of tongs under the musician's nose. René Chartier, savagely rolling his eyes, threw down his score, saying that he returned his part.

"I don't believe the Luzancourts are coming either," said the Baronne, with a sigh.

"All is not lost. I have an idea," said the little Baron. "One must know how to make a sacrifice when it's useful. Say nothing to Lacrisse!"

"Nothing to Lacrisse?"

"Nothing that matters. Leave it to me."

He left her and approached the noisy chorus. To the Duchess, who asked him for another cocktail, he gently remarked:

"Don't bother me."

Then he sat down beside Joseph Lacrisse who was meditating apart, and spoke to him for some time in a low voice. His manner was serious and resolute.

"It's true enough," he said to the secretary of the Committee of Young Royalists. "We must overthrow the Republic and save France. And to do that we need money. My mother is of the

same opinion. She is prepared to pay fifty thousand francs to the King's account for expenses of propaganda."

Joseph Lacrisse thanked him in the King's name.

"Monseigneur," he said, "will be happy to learn that your mother adds her patriotic offering to that of the three French ladies who displayed such chivalrous generosity. You may be sure that he will express his gratitude in a letter written by his own hand."

"It's not worth speaking of," said young Bonmont.

And after a short silence he added:

"When you see the Brécés and the Courtrais, my dear Lacrisse, you might tell them to come to our little fête."

CHAPTER XVII

IT was the first day of the New Year. Between two showers Monsieur Bergeret and his daughter Pauline wended their way along the streets still covered with fresh golden mud, to wish the compliments of the season to a maternal aunt of Monsieur Bergeret's who still survived, but lived alone, if living it could be called, in a little Beguine's cell which stood in a kitchen garden, amid the sound of convent bells. Pauline was happy without a reason simply because holidays such as these, which marked the flight of time, made her the more conscious of the delightful progress of her young life.

On this solemn day Monsieur Bergeret still observed his customary indulgence, no longer expecting much good from his fellow-creatures or from life itself, but knowing, like Monsieur Fagon, that one must forgive nature a great deal. All along the road beggars of every description, standing upright like candlesticks, or spread out like temporary altars, formed the decorations of this

social fête. They had all come to help to adorn the bourgeois quarters, all our poor unfortunates, lame, halt and blind; crooks, tramps, pickpockets, malingerers, rogues, and hardened ruffians. Yielding, however, to the general tendency to obliterate individual character, and to conform with the universal mediocrity of manners, they did not expose to view horrible malformations and ghastly sores as in the days of the great Coësre. They did not bind their mutilated limbs with blood-stained rags; they were modest and affected only endurable infirmities. One of them hobbled nimbly after Monsieur Bergeret for some considerable distance. Then he stopped and took up his position once more like a lamp-post on the edge of the pavement. After which Monsieur Bergeret remarked to his daughter:

"I have just committed a wicked action; I have given alms. In giving a couple of sous to Monsieur Hobbler I tasted the shameful joy of humiliating my fellow-man. I was a partner to the odious pact that gives power to the strong and leaves the weak in their weakness. I have sealed with my own seal the injustice of ages and contributed my share to depriving this man of one half of his soul."

"You've done all that, papa?" asked Pauline incredulously.

"Almost all that," replied Monsieur Bergeret. "I have sold fraternity to my brother Hobbler,

using false weights, and in humiliating him I have brought humiliation on myself, for almsgiving degrades both him who gives and him who takes. I have done wrong."

"I don't think so," said Pauline.

"You don't think so," replied Monsieur Bergeret, "because you have no philosophy and are incapable of tracing from an apparently innocent action the stupendous consequences which it bears within itself. This fellow induced me to offer him alms. I could not resist the importunity of his whining appeal. I pitied his bare thin neck, the knees of his trousers, which, baggy from too long wear, bear such a depressing resemblance to the knees of a camel, and his feet, on which his shoes were gaping at the toes like a couple of ducks. Seducer! Dangerous Hobbler! Through you my sous have produced their little share of baseness and shame. Through you I have created with ten centimes a little ugliness and evil. In handing you that tiny token of wealth and power, I have ironically made you a capitalist, and invited you, an unhonoured guest, to the banquet of society, the feast of civilization. And as I did it I felt that I was one of the mighty of this world as compared with you, a rich man compared with you, my gentle Hobbler, exquisite mendicant and flatterer. I rejoiced and was proud, exulting in my opulence and my great-

ness. O Hobbler, live for ever! *Pulcher hymnus divitiarum pauper immortalis.*

"An abominable practice, that of almsgiving! A barbarous pity, that of charity! An ancient error, that of the well-to-do who give a penny and think they are performing a good deed, who believe they have fulfilled their whole duty to their fellow-man by means of the most miserable, awkward, ridiculous, senseless and mean action which could possibly be committed with a view to a better distribution of wealth. This habit of almsgiving is contrary to beneficence and abhorrent to charity."

"Really?" said Pauline good-humouredly.

"Almsgiving," went on Monsieur Bergeret, "is no more to be compared to beneficence than a monkey's grimace to the smile of the Joconda. Beneficence is as ingenious as almsgiving is inept. It is vigilant, and proportions its efforts to the need. That is precisely what I did not do with regard to brother Hobbler. The very name of beneficence evoked the most beautiful ideas in the sensitive minds of the century of the philosophers. It used to be believed that the name was first created by the good Abbé de Saint Pierre, but it is older still, and can be found in the old Balzac. In the sixteenth century men said *bénéficence,* not *bienfaisance,* but it is the same word. I must admit that I do not find its pristine beauty in the word *bienfaisance;* for me

it has been spoiled by the Pharisees who have made too free a use of it. We have many charitable institutions in our country, pawn-shops, provident societies, mutual aid and insurance societies. Some of these are useful and do good service. But their common defect is that they proceed to aggravate the very social iniquity which they are intended to correct; they are poisonous remedies. Universal beneficence would have every one living by his own labours and not on the labours of others. Everything but fair exchange and solidarity is vile and shameful and unfruitful. Human charity is the co-operation of all in the production and division of the fruits of labour.

"Charity is justice; it is love, and the poor are more skilled in it than the rich. What rich man has ever practised human charity as fully as Epictetus or Benoît Malon? True charity is the gift of each man's work to all; it is a beautiful kindness; it is the harmonious gesture of the soul which bows itself like a vase of precious ointment, pouring forth its benefits. It is Michael Angelo painting the Sistine Chapel, or the deputies in the National Assembly on the night of the 4th of August. It is giving, in all its happy completeness; it is money poured forth together with love and thought. We have nothing that belongs to us alone but ourselves; we truly give only when we give our work, our minds, our genius.

And this splendid offering of one's whole self to all men enriches the giver as much as the community."

"But," objected Pauline, "you could not give love and beauty to Hobbler, so you gave him what was most convenient to him."

"It is true that Hobbler has become a mere animal. Of all the good things that gratify man, he cares only for alcohol. I conclude as much from the fact that as he came towards me he reeked of brandy. But, such as he is, he is our work. Our pride fathered and our sin mothered him; he is the evil fruit of our vices. Every man in the world should both give and receive. He has not given enough, doubtless because he has not received enough."

"He may be lazy," said Pauline. *"Mon Dieu,* how can we do away with poverty and weakness and idleness! Don't you believe that men are naturally good and that it is society that makes them wicked?"

"No, I don't believe that men are naturally good," replied Monsieur Bergeret. "What I see is that they are emerging painfully and very slowly from their primitive barbarism, and that with great effort they are organizing a justice that is uncertain and a charity that is precarious. The time is yet far distant when they will be kind and gentle to one

another. The time is yet far distant when they will not war upon one another, and when pictures representing battle scenes will be hidden away as affording an immoral and shameful spectacle. I believe that the reign of violence will last a long time yet, that for many years to come the nations will rend one another asunder for trivial reasons; that for many years to come the people of the same country will desperately snatch from one another the common necessaries of life, instead of equitably dividing them. But I also believe that men are least ferocious when they are least wretched, that in the long run the progress of industry will produce a certain softening of manners. A botanist has assured me that if a hawthorn be transplanted from a stony to a fruitful soil its thorns will change into flowers."

"There you are! You are an optimist, papa; I knew you were!" cried Pauline, stopping short for a moment in the middle of the pavement to gaze at her father with her dawn-grey eyes, full of gentle radiance and morning coolness. "You are an optimist. You are working with a cheerful heart to build the house of the future. That is good! It is a fine thing to build the New Republic with men of good will."

Monsieur Bergeret smiled at the hopeful words and youthful eyes.

"Yes," he said, "it would be fine to lay the foun-

dations for the new society, where each man would receive the just price of his labour."

"It will happen, won't it? But when?" asked Pauline innocently.

"Do not ask me to prophesy, my child," answered Monsieur Bergeret sadly and gently. "It is not without reason that the ancients considered the power of piercing the future as the most fatal gift that could be bestowed upon man. If it were possible for us to see what is to come, there would be nothing left for us but to die; or perhaps we should fall stricken to death by grief or terror. We must work at the future like weavers who work at their tapestries without seeing what they accomplish."

Thus conversing, the father and daughter proceeded on their way. In front of the square in the Rue de Sèvres they met a solitary beggar standing motionless on the pavement.

"I've no more change," said Monsieur Bergeret. "Can you lend me a couple of sous, Pauline? That outstretched hand bars my way. If it were in the Place de la Concorde it would still bar my way. The outstretched hand of a beggar is a barrier that I cannot pass. It is a weakness that I cannot overcome. Give the man something. It's pardonable. We must not let ourselves exaggerate the harm we do."

"Papa, I'd like to know what you will do with Hobbler in your Republic. You can't imagine he will live on the fruits of his labour?"

"My daughter," said Monsieur Bergeret, "I think he will consent to disappear. He is already greatly diminished. Idleness and a passion for rest are urging him toward final elimination. He will return to oblivion easily."

"I believe, on the other hand, that he thoroughly enjoys being alive."

"True, he has his joys. No doubt he delights in swallowing the vitriol of the dram-shop. He will disappear altogether with the last drinking house. There will be no publicans in my Republic, no buyers and no sellers, no rich and no poor, and each will enjoy the fruits of his labours."

"We all shall be happy, papa."

"No; for without suffering the sacred flame of pity which makes for the beauty of the soul would perish. But that will never be. Moral and physical evil, incessantly opposed, will share with happiness and delight the empire of the earth, as day will follow night. Evil is necessary; like good, it has its roots deep in human nature, and the one cannot perish without the other. Suffering is the twin sister of joy, and as they breathe upon the chords of our being they cause them to vibrate harmoniously. The breath of happiness alone would produce but a dull

and tedious sound, like silence. But the artificial ills arising out of social conditions will no longer be added to those that are inevitable, commonplace and august, which arise out of our human state. Men will no longer be deformed by iniquitous labours by which they die rather than live. The slave will come out of his cell and the factory will no longer devour the bodies of millions.

"And I anticipate that this delivery will come from machinery itself; the engine that has mangled so many men will come gently and generously to the aid of suffering human flesh. Cruel and hard to begin with, machinery will become kind, favourable and friendly. How can it change its soul? Listen. The spark that flashed from the Leyden jar, the little subtle star that revealed itself in the last century to the wonder-stricken philosopher, will accomplish this miracle. The Unknown which has allowed itself to be conquered without revealing its nature, the mysterious captive force, the intangible, seized by human hands, the obedient lightning, bottled and distributed over the innumerable wires that cover the face of the earth with their network—electricity will yield up its energy, will give its help wherever it is needed: in the houses, the rooms, the homes where father, mother, and children will henceforth never be separated. This is no dream. The cruel machine that crushes soul and body in the factory

will become domestic, intimate and familiar. But it is useless, quite useless for the pulleys, wheels, connecting-rods, cranks, bearings and flywheels to become humanized if men themselves remain iron-hearted.

"We are waiting for and appealing to a yet more wonderful change. The day will come when the employer, growing in moral beauty, will become a worker among the liberated workers; when there will be no more wages, but only an exchange in kind. The great manufacturers, like the old nobility, whose place they have taken and whom they are imitating, will go through their 4th of August. They will abandon their disputed profits and threatened privileges. They will become generous when they feel that it is time to be so.

"What says the employer of to-day? That he is the mind and the thought, and that without him his army of workers would be like a body deprived of understanding. Well, if that be true, let him content himself with so much joy and honour. Because a man is thought and soul must he therefore gorge himself with riches? When the great Donatello and his companions designed a bronze statue it was he who was the soul of the creation. He placed the price paid for the work by the prince and the citizens in a basket which hung from a pulley fixed to one of the rafters of the studio, and each of his

companions untied the rope and took from the basket what he needed. Is not the joy of creative intelligence enough, and does such an advantage exempt the master worker from sharing the gain with his humble collaborators? But in my Republic there will be no gain, no wages, and all will belong to each."

"Papa, that's collectivism," said Pauline quietly.

"The most precious gifts," replied Monsieur Bergeret, "are common to all men and have always been so. Air and light are the common property of all that breathes and sees the light of day. After the secular labours of egoism and avarice, in spite of the violent efforts of individuals to seize and keep wealth, the individual possessions enjoyed by the wealthiest among us are little when compared with those that belong without distinction to mankind in general. And even in our society do you not notice that the most beautiful and splendid possessions, such as roads, rivers, forests, which were once royal, libraries and museums, belong to all? Not a single rich man has a greater claim than I to an old oak-tree at Fontainebleau or a picture in the Louvre. And they are more mine than the rich man's if I can appreciate them better. Collective property, dreaded like some remote monster, is already among us in a thousand familiar forms. When prophesied, it alarms, in spite of the fact

that we already enjoy many of the advantages which it affords.

"The Positivists who meet in the house of Auguste Comte, under the leadership of the venerable Monsieur Pierre Laffitte, are in no hurry to become Socialists. But one of them made the judicious remark that all property springs from a social source. Nothing could be truer, for all property acquired by individual effort was created, and subsists, only by the co-operation of the whole community. And since private property springs from a social source we neither forget its origin nor corrupt its essence if we offer it to the community and entrust it to the State upon which it necessarily depends. And what is the State?"

Mademoiselle Bergeret hastened to answer that question:

"The State, papa, is a wretched cross-grained person sitting behind a counter-rail. You must see that no one will want to strip himself naked for such as he."

"I understand," said Monsieur Bergeret with a smile. "I have always tried to understand, and in so doing I have wasted much precious energy. I am discovering late in life that not to understand is a great faculty. It sometimes helps you to the conquest of the world. If Napoleon had been as intelligent as Spinoza he would have lived in a garret and

written four books. I understand. But to return to this wretched cross-grained man behind the counter-rail, you trust your letters to him, Pauline, letters that you would not trust to the Tricoche Agency. He manages a portion of your property, not the least in extent or in value. He looks gloomy to you, but when he becomes everything he will cease to be anything, or rather he will only be ourselves. Annihilated by his universality, he will cease to appear tiresome. One is no longer wicked, my daughter, when one ceases to exist. What makes him unpleasant to-day is that he encroaches on individual property, that he goes along filing and scratching, taking a little bite from the fat and a big bite from the thin. That makes him unbearable. He is greedy; he is needy. In my Republic he will be without desires, like the gods. He will have all and nothing. We shall not notice him because he will be like ourselves, indistinguishable from ourselves; will be as though he didn't exist. And when you say that I sacrifice the individual to the State, the living man to an abstraction, I am, on the contrary, subordinating the abstraction to reality, to the State which I suppress, by identifying it with the activities of the whole social organism.

"Even were my Republic never to exist I should be glad that I had played with this idea of it. It is permissible to build in Utopia. And Au-

guste Comte himself, who flattered himself that he built only on the data of positive science, placed Campanella in the calendar of great men.

"The dreams of philosophers have in all ages raised up men of action who have set to work to realize those dreams. Our thought creates the future. Statesmen work on the plans which we leave behind us. No, my child, I am not building in Utopia. My dream, which in no way belongs to me, but is, at this very moment, the dream of thousands upon thousands of souls, is true and prophetic. All societies whose organs no longer correspond to the functions for which they were created, and whose members are not recompensed according to the useful work which they accomplish, die. Deep-rooted disturbances and inward disorder precede and proclaim their end.

"Feudal society was strongly constituted. When the clergy ceased to represent learning, and the nobility to defend the labourer and artisan by the sword, and these two orders became merely swollen and dangerous members, the whole body perished. An unexpected and necessary revolution carried off the patriot. Who can maintain that in modern society the organs correspond with their functions and that all the members are nourished in proportion to the useful work which they perform? Who can maintain that there is a fair distribution of wealth?

Who, I say, can believe in the permanence of unrighteousness?"

"And how can we put an end to it, papa? How can we change the world?"

"By the force of speech, my child. Nothing is more powerful than speech. The linking of powerful arguments and noble thoughts forms a chain that nothing can break. Speech, like the sling of David, lays low the violent and causes the mighty to fall. It is an invincible weapon, without which the world would belong to armed brutes. What keeps them in abeyance? Merely thought, naked and weaponless.

"I shall not see the new State. All changes in the social order, as in the natural order, are slow and almost imperceptible. A geologist of profound understanding, Charles Lyell by name, demonstrated that those fearful traces of the glacial period, those monstrous rocks carried into the valleys, the flora and the furry beasts of cold countries succeeding to the flora and fauna of hot countries, those apparent tokens of cataclysmic upheaval, were in reality only the effect of prolonged and multiple action, and that those great changes, produced with the merciful deliberation of natural forces, were not even suspected by the innumerable generations of living creatures that existed during their accomplishment. Social transformations operate in the same way,

insensibly and incessantly. The timid man fears, as he would a future cataclysm, a change which began before he was born, which is going on before his unconscious eyes, and which will become noticeable only in a century's time."

CHAPTER XVIII

MONSIEUR FELIX PANNETON was sauntering up the Champs-Élysées on his way to the Arc de Triomphe, calculating the chances of his election to the Senate. His candidature had not yet been announced. And Monsieur Panneton reflected, like Bonaparte: "To act, to calculate, to act . . ." Two lists had already been offered to the electors of the department. The four retiring Senators, Laprat-Teulet, Goby, Mannequin and Ledru, were presenting themselves for re-election. The Nationalist candidates were the Comte de Brécé, Colonel Despautères, Monsieur Lerond the ex-magistrate, and Lafolie the butcher.

It was difficult to say which of the two lists would win the day. The retiring Senators found favour in the eyes of the peace-lovers because of their long experience of legislation, and because they were guardians of those liberal yet authoritative traditions which dated back to the foundation of the Republic and were connected with the legendary name of Gambetta. They won the public favour by intelli-

gently-rendered services and abundant promises, and they had a large and well-disciplined body of supporters. These public men, who had lived in stirring times, remained faithful to their doctrine with a firmness that embellished the sacrifices which circumstances forced them to make to the exigencies of public opinion. Opportunists in former days, they now called themselves Radicals. At the time of the Affair they had all four testified to their profound respect for the court-martial, and in one of them this respect was mingled with genuine emotion.

The ex-attorney Goby could never speak of military justice without shedding tears. The oldest of them, Laprat-Teulet, a Republican who had taken part in the great conflicts of the heroic days, spoke of the Army in such loving and impassioned terms that, at any other period, his hearers would have judged his expressions more applicable to some poor orphan girl than to an institution so strong in men and in millions. These four Senators had voted for the law of deprivation and had expressed to the General Council the pious hope that the Government would take stringent measures to check the Revisionist agitation. These were the Dreyfusards of the department, and as there were no others they were furiously opposed by the Nationalists. They blamed Mannequin for being the brother-in-law of a councillor in the Court of Appeal. As for Laprat-

Teulet, who headed the list, he was greeted with insults and venomous abuse that bespattered them all. Truth to tell, he had done a stroke or two of business on his own account. People recalled the time when, finding himself mixed up in the Panama affair and threatened with arrest, he had grown a long beard that gave him a venerable appearance and was wheeled about in a little chair by his pious wife and his daughter, the latter dressed as a nun. Every day, as part of this humble and saintly procession, he would pass by beneath the elm-trees of the Mall and have himself put in the sun, a poor paralytic who traced figures in the dust with the tip of his walking-stick, while with cunning skill he prepared his defence, which a verdict of "insufficient cause" had rendered useless. Since then he had recovered, but the fury of the Nationalists was hot against him. He was a Panamist, so they called him a Dreyfusard. "This man," said Ledru to himself, "will ruin the whole lot of us." He mentioned his apprehensions to Worms-Clavelin:

"Would it not be possible, monsieur le préfet, to make Laprat-Teulet, a man who has rendered such signal service to the Republic and the country, understand that the time has come for him to retire into private life?"

The prefect replied that they must think twice before decapitating the Republican list.

However, the newspaper *La Croix,* introduced into the department by Madame Worms-Clavelin, carried on a ferocious campaign against the retiring Senators. It supported the Republican list, which was cleverly constructed. Monsieur de Brécé rallied the Royalists, who were fairly strong in the department; Monsieur Lerond, as ex-magistrate and a clerical advocate, was favoured by the clergy; and Colonel Despautères, in himself an unimportant old man, represented the honour of the Army. He had praised the forgers and was among the subscribers to the fund for the widow of Colonel Henry. The butcher Lafolie pleased the working-people, who were half peasants, living on the outskirts of the town. It was believed that the Brécé list would obtain more than two hundred votes and that it might go right through. Monsieur Worms-Clavelin was uneasy, and when *La Croix* published the manifesto of the Nationalist candidates he became extremely anxious. It attacked the President of the Republic, called the Senate a poultry-run and a pigsty, and referred to the Cabinet as the "Ministry of Treason." "If these fellows get in, I'm done," thought the prefect, and he remarked gently to his wife:

"You were wrong, my dear, to favour the diffusion of *La Croix* in the department."

"What else could I do?" she replied. "As a

Jewess, I was obliged to exaggerate my Catholic opinions. And up to now that has helped us a good deal."

"True," replied the prefect; "but we have perhaps gone a little too far."

Monsieur Lacarelle, secretary to the prefecture, whose famous resemblance to Vercingetorix inclined him to Nationalism, spoke in favour of the Brécé list, and Monsieur Worms-Clavelin, a prey to gloomy meditation, forgot his cigars and left them, with chewed ends and still alight, on the arms of the chairs.

Just at this time Monsieur Felix Panneton called to see him.

Monsieur Felix Panneton, the younger brother of Monsieur Panneton de La Barge, was an army contractor. No one could suspect his love of the Army whose heads and feet he covered. He was a Nationalist, but a Government-Nationalist. He was a Nationalist with Monsieur Loubet and Monsieur Waldeck-Rousseau. He did not disguise the fact, and when he was told that such a thing was impossible he replied:

"It isn't impossible; it isn't even difficult; the main thing was the idea."

Panneton the Nationalist remained loyal to the Government. "There is plenty of time to change," he thought, "and all those who broke too soon with

the Government have had cause to regret it. One is too apt to forget that even a prostrate Ministry has time to deal you a kick and break your jaw." Such wisdom was the fruit of his common sense. He was ambitious, but did his best to satisfy his ambition without sacrificing his business or his pleasures, which were pictures and women. For the rest, he was a very energetic person, always running to and fro between his factories and Paris, where he had three or four addresses.

The idea of worming his way in between the Radicals and the pure Nationalists having dawned upon him one day, he went to see Monsieur Worms-Clavelin.

"The proposition I am about to make to you, monsieur le préfet, cannot but be agreeable to you. I therefore feel certain beforehand of your consent," he said. "You are anxious for the success of the Laprat-Teulet list. It is your duty to be so. I respect your feelings in the matter, but I cannot second them. You are afraid of the success of the Brécé list. Nothing more legitimate. In this connection I may be useful to you. I am forming, with three of my friends, a list of Nationalist candidates. The department is Nationalist but it is moderate. My programme will be Nationalist and Republican. I shall have the clergy against me, but the bishops will be on my side. Do not contest my

claim. Observe a benevolent neutrality toward me. I shall not take many votes from the Laprat list, but, on the other hand, I shall take a great many from the Brécé list. I will not disguise the fact that I quite expect to go through on the third scrutiny. But this will be to your advantage as well, because the extremists will be left in the cart."

"Monsieur Panneton," replied Monsieur Worms-Clavelin, "you have long been assured of my personal sympathies. I thank you for the interesting communication which you have been kind enough to make. I will think it over and act in conformity with the interest of the Republican Party, endeavouring meanwhile to fathom the intentions of the Government."

He offered Monsieur Panneton a cigar and in a friendly way asked him if he had not just come from Paris, and what he thought of the new piece at the Variétés. He asked this question because he knew that Panneton was keeping one of the actresses there. Felix Panneton was supposed to be a great lover of women. He was a big, ugly man of fifty, dark and bald, with high shoulders and a reputation for wit.

Some days after his interview with Worms-Clavelin, he was walking up the Champs-Élysées thinking of his candidature, which augured fairly well, and of the importance of making a start as

soon as possible. But just at the moment of publishing the list, which he headed, one of the candidates, Monsieur de Terremondre, had backed out. Monsieur de Terremondre was too moderate to separate himself from the extremists. Hearing their cries redoubled, he had gone back to them. "Just what I expected," thought Panneton. "It doesn't much matter. I will put Gromance in Terremondre's place. Gromance will do the trick, Gromance the landed proprietor—and every acre that he possesses mortgaged. But that will do him no harm except in his own district. He is in Paris. I'll go and see him."

He had reached this point in his reflections when he saw Madame de Gromance coming towards him in a mink coat that came down to her feet. Even under the thick fur she was still slim and dainty. He found her delicious.

"I am delighted to see you, dear lady. How is Monsieur de Gromance?"

"Oh—quite well."

When people asked her for news of her husband she was always afraid of their doing so in an ill-bred spirit of irony.

"May I walk a little way with you, madame? I want to discuss some serious matters with you. First——"

"Well?"

"That coat gives you a barbaric appearance, you look like a charming little savage."

"Are these the serious matters?"

"I'm coming to them. It is absolutely necessary for Monsieur de Gromance to present himself as a candidate for the Senate. The interests of his country demand it. Monsieur de Gromance is a Nationalist, is he not?"

She looked at him with a touch of indignation.

"He certainly isn't an Intellectual."

"And is he a Republican?"

"Heavens, yes! I'll explain. He's a Royalist. So you understand——"

"Ah, dear lady, those are the best Republicans. We will put the name of Monsieur de Gromance prominently upon our list of Republican Nationalists."

"And do you think that Dieudonné will get in?"

"Madame, I think so. We have the bishops with us and many senatorial electors who, although Nationalists by conviction, uphold the Government on account of their office or their interests. And in the event of failure, which could only be an honourable failure, Monsieur de Gromance can rely on the gratitude of the Government and the Administration. I'll tell you a great secret. Worms-Clavelin is on our side."

"Then I don't see why Dieudonné——"

"Are you quite sure your husband will accept?"

"Go and see him yourself."

"You are the only person with any influence over him."

"Do you think so?"

"I am quite sure of it."

"Then it's settled."

"No, it isn't settled. There are very delicate details which we can't settle like this in the street. Come and see me and I will show you my Baudouins. Come to-morrow."

He whispered the address, the number of a house in a dull deserted street in the Quartier de l'Europe. There, at a respectable distance from his lawful and spacious domicile in the Champs-Élysées, he had a small house, built in former days for a fashionable painter.

"Is there any special hurry?"

"I should say so. Just think, my dear madame, we have only three weeks left for our electoral campaign and Brécé has been working the department for six months."

"But is it quite necessary that I should come and see your——?"

"My Baudouins? It is indispensable."

"Is it really?"

"Listen and judge for yourself, dear lady. I do not deny that your husband's name has a certain

prestige among the rural population, especially in the parts where he is little known. But I cannot disguise the fact that when I proposed to add his name to our list I met with opposition. This opposition still exists. You must give me strength to overcome it. I must draw from your—your friendship the irresistible will to—— In short, I feel that if you do not give me your sympathy I shall not have the necessary energy to——"

"But is it quite proper for me to go and see your——?"

"Oh, in Paris!"

"If I do, of course it will be for the sake of the country and the Army. We must save France."

"That is my opinion."

"Remember me to Madame Panneton."

"I will not forget, dear madame. Until to-morrow."

CHAPTER XIX

IN Monsieur Felix Panneton's little house there was a large room which had formerly been used as a studio by the fashionable painter, and which the new inmate had furnished with the magnificence of a great collector of curios and the discretion of an accomplished lover of women. Artistically and in methodical order Monsieur Panneton had strewn the room with couches, sofas and divans of all shapes and kinds.

Looking from right to left as you went in, you would first of all notice a little blue silk settee the arms of which, shaped like a swan's neck, reminded one of the time when Bonaparte in Paris, like Tiberius of old in Rome, was bent on improving the manners and customs of society. Then came another rather bigger couch upholstered in Beauvais cloth with tapestry-covered ends; then a settee in three divisions, covered in silk; then a little wooden settee *à la capucine* with a covering of Turkish tapestry; then a large sofa of gilded wood upholstered in crimson figured velvet with cushions

of the same, which had belonged to Mademoiselle Damours; then a broad, low, luxuriously stuffed divan of flame-coloured silk; and finally a tottering mass of soft cushions on a very low Oriental divan which, bathed in a dim rose-coloured light, stood on the left near the Baudouin room.

As she entered the room, each charming visitor could thus take in with a glance the varied seats and choose the one that best suited her moral character and her present state of mind. Panneton, from the first, observed his new friends, noticed their expressions, took some trouble to discover their tastes, and was careful to ensure that they should sit only where they wished to sit. The more chaste of his lady friends went straight to the little blue settee, placing a gloved hand on the swan's neck. There was also a high straight-backed arm-chair of gilded wood and Genoa velvet, the former throne of a Duchess of Modena and Parma; that was for the haughty beauties. The Parisian ladies seated themselves calmly on the Beauvais couch; the foreign princesses generally preferred one of the two sofas. Thanks to the judicious arrangement of these aids to conversation, Panneton knew at a glance what he had to do. He was in a position to observe all the conventions, careful not to attempt too sudden a transition in the necessary succession of his attitudes, and was able to spare both his visitor and himself those long

and useless pauses between the preliminary courtesies and the inspection of the Baudouins. His proceedings thereby gained a certainty and a mastery which did him honour.

Madame de Gromance gave immediate proof of a tact for which Panneton was grateful. Without so much as a glance at the throne of Parma and Modena, and leaving on the right the Napoleonic swan's neck, she sat on the flowered Beauvais sofa like a Parisienne. Clotilde had languished among the smaller landed gentry of the department and had had attentions paid to her by some rather underbred young men; but the meaning of life was dawning upon her. She had racked her brains over money matters and was beginning to understand what social duty entailed. She did not dislike Panneton excessively. Partially bald, with very black hair brushed smoothly over his temples, and large prominent eyes, he looked like a lovesick apoplectic, and made her feel rather inclined to laugh, satisfying that craving for the comic element in love of which she had always been conscious. No doubt she would have preferred a magnificent young man, but she was inclined to facile gaiety and the sort of amusement which a man derives from jokes of a rather highly salted nature and a certain kind of ugliness. After a moment of very natural shyness she felt that it would not be so terrible, nor even very tedious.

Everything went well. The transit from the Beauvais to the settee and from the settee to the big sofa took place with all due decorum. They judged it needless to linger on the Oriental cushions and went straight into the Baudouin room.

When Clotilde thought of looking at it the room, like the erotic painter's pictures, was strewn with women's garments and fine linen.

"Ah, there are the Baudouins, you have two of them."

"Just so."

He had the *Jardinier galant* and the *Carquois épuisé,* two little water-colours for which he had paid 60,000 francs apiece at the Godard sale, and which cost him considerably more than that because of the use to which he put them. Calm once more, and a little melancholy even, he gazed with the eye of a connoisseur at the slender, graceful, supple figure of the woman before him, and, finding her beautiful, was conscious of a little feeling of pride, which grew as she gradually reassumed her social characteristics together with her garments.

She demanded the list of candidates.

"Panneton, manufacturer; Dieudonné de Gromance, landed proprietor; Dr. Fornerol; Mulot, explorer."

"Mulot?"

"Young Mulot. He was running up bills in Paris,

so his father sent him round the world. Désiré Mulot, explorer. That sounds well, an explorer candidate! The electors hope he will open up new fields for their goods. Above all, they feel flattered."

Madame de Gromance was becoming serious. She wanted to hear the address to the senatorial electors. He outlined it and repeated some parts which he knew by heart.

"First, we promise general pacification. Brécé and the pure Nationalists have not sufficiently insisted on pacification. Then we absolutely demolish the nameless party."

She asked what the nameless party was.

"For us it's the party of our adversaries; for our adversaries it is ourselves. There can be no mistake about that. We demolish the traitors, the creatures who have sold themselves. We fight against the power of gold—that is useful for the poor ruined aristocracy. Enemies of all reaction, we repudiate political adventure. France is resolved on peace, but the day when she draws the sword from the scabbard, etc. The country that regards with pride and affection her admirable national Army— I shall have to alter that sentence a little."

"Why?"

"Because it is in both the other addresses, word for word; the Nationalists have it and so have the enemies of the Army."

"And you promise me that Dieudonné will get in."

"Dieudonné or Goby."

"What! Dieudonné or Goby? If you were not any surer than that you ought to have told me. Dieudonné or Goby! To hear you one would think it was all one which got in."

"It isn't all one, but in either case Brécé goes under."

"Brécé is one of our friends, you know."

"And one of mine! In either case, as I said before, Brécé and his list will go under, and having contributed to his downfall the prefect and the Government will be under obligations to Monsieur de Gromance. After the elections, no matter how they result, you will come and see my Baudouins again and I will make of your husband—whatever you will."

"An ambassador."

At the scrutiny of the 28th of January, the list of Nationalist candidates, Comte de Brécé, Colonel Despautères, Lerond, ex-magistrate, Lafolie, butcher, obtained an average of about a hundred votes. The Progressive Republicans, Felix Panneton, manufacturer, Dieudonné de Gromance, landed proprietor, Mulot, explorer, and Dr. Fornerol, obtained an average of a hundred and thirty votes. Laprat-

Teulet, implicated in the Panama affair, only succeeded in obtaining a hundred and twenty votes. The other three retiring Senators obtained an average of two hundred votes.

At the second scrutiny Laprat-Teulet's votes fell to sixty.

At the third scrutiny Goby, Mannequin and Ledru, the three retiring Radical Senators, and Felix Panneton, Republican Progressive, were elected.

CHAPTER XX

OOK at the scene before you," said Monsieur Bergeret to his disciple Monsieur Goubin, who was polishing his eyeglass, as they stood on the steps of the Trocadero. "Look at the domes, minarets, spires, belfries, towers and pediments; the roofs of thatch, slate, glass, tile, wood, hide and coloured earthenware; the Italian and Moorish terraces, the palaces, temples, pagodas, kiosks, huts, hovels, and tents; the fountains and fire-works; the harmony and contrast of all these human habitations, the marvels of workmanship, the wonderful playthings of industry, the prodigious diversions of modern genius, which has brought together in this spot the arts and crafts of the whole world."

"Do you think," queried Monsieur Goubin, "that France will derive any profit from this huge Exhibition?"

"She may reap great advantages from it," replied Monsieur Bergeret, "provided it does not fill her with a barren and hostile pride. All this is only

the decoration and envelope, it is the study of what it contains that will give us the opportunity of considering more minutely the exchange and circulation of products, their consumption at fair prices, the increase of work and wages and the emancipation of the worker. And do you not admire, Monsieur Goubin, one of the first kind offices of the Universal Exhibition, in scaring away Jean Coq and Jean Mouton? Where are they now? You neither see nor hear them nowadays, and formerly one saw nothing else. Jean Coq led the way, with his head high, his calves prominent. Jean Mouton followed him, fat and curly-headed. The whole city re-echoed to the sound of their cock-a-doodle-doo and baa-baa-baa, for they were eloquent. One day this winter I overheard Jean Coq say, 'We must have a war. This Government has made it inevitable by its cowardice!' And Jean Mouton replied: 'I'd rather have a naval war.' 'Of course,' said Jean Coq, 'a sea-fight would be consistent with the enthusiasm of the Nationalists. But why not have war on land as well as on sea? Who's to stop us?' 'No one,' replied Jean Coq. 'I should like to see anyone try to stop us! But we must first exterminate all traitors and spies, all Jews and Freemasons. That is essential.' 'That's just what I think,' replied Jean Mouton. 'And I will not go to war until our land has been cleared of all her enemies.'

"Jean Coq is hot-headed, Jean Mouton mild and peaceful, but they both know only too well how to whet the national energies not to attempt by every means in their power to assure to their country the benefits of war at home and abroad.

"Jean Coq and Jean Mouton are Republicans. Jean Coq votes at every election for the Imperialist candidate, and Jean Mouton for the Royalist, but they are both of them Republican Plebiscitarians, and can imagine nothing better for the consolidation of their chosen Government than to deliver it over to the hazards of an obscure and disorderly suffrage; in which they show themselves to be clever fellows. For it is, of course, a profitable thing, if you have a house, to stake it at dice against a truss of hay, because by so doing you run the chance of winning your own house, which of course would be a great advantage.

"Jean Coq is not pious, neither is Jean Mouton a clerical, although he is no Freethinker, but they venerate and cherish the monks who grow rich by the sale of miracles and who publish seditious, insulting and slanderous newspapers. And you know as well as I do how such people abound in this country of ours and how they prey upon it.

"Jean Coq and Jean Mouton are patriots. You think you, too, are a patriot, and I know that you are attached to your country by the tender and

invincible ties of sentiment and reason. You are mistaken, however, and if it be your wish to live at peace with the world you are in league with the enemy. Jean Coq and Jean Mouton will prove that by falling upon you with their cudgels to the war-cry of 'France for the French!' 'France for the French!' is the slogan of Jean Coq and Jean Mouton, and as it is evident that these words exactly describe the position of a great nation in the midst of other nations, and express the necessary conditions of life, the universal law of exchange, the commerce of ideas and of products, just as they contain a great economical doctrine and a profound philosophy, Jean Coq and Jean Mouton have made up their minds to shut out all foreigners in order to keep France for the French, thus, by a stroke of genius, extending to human beings the system which Monsieur Méline applied only to the products of agriculture and industry, for the greater profit of a small number of landed proprietors. And this idea of Jean Coq's, of closing the country to men of other nations, enforces, by its modest beauty, the admiration of quite a host of small middle-class people and coffee-house keepers.

"Jean Coq and Jean Mouton are not evil; they are only the innocent enemies of the human species. Jean Coq is the more ardent, Jean Mouton the more melancholy, but they are simple fellows both, and

believe what their newspapers tell them. This throws a dazzling light upon their innocence, for it is not easy to believe what their newspapers tell them. I take you all to witness, all you famous impostors, you forgers of all time; you egregious liars, distinguished tricksters, notorious creators of fictitious errors and illusions; you whose time-honoured frauds have enriched literature, sacred and profane, by so many dubious volumes; authors of apocryphal Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Syrian and Chaldean writings which have so long deceived learned and ignorant alike; you, false Pythagoras, false Hermes-Trismegistus, false Sanchoniathon, fallacious editors of the Orphic poems and the Sibylline books; false Enoch, false Esdras, pseudo-Clement and pseudo-Timothy; and you lord abbots who, to assure yourselves of the possession of your lands and privileges, forged in the reign of Louis IX the charters of Clotaire and Dagobert; and you, doctors of canon law, who based the pretensions of the Holy See on a heap of sacred decretals composed by yourselves; and you, wholesale manufacturers of historical memoirs: Soulavie, Courchamps, Touchard-Lafosse, lying Weber, lying Bourrienne; you, sham executioners and sham police-agents, who wrote the sordid memoirs of Samson and Monsieur Claude; and you, Vrain-Lucas, who with your own hand traced a letter said to be written by Mary

Magdalene, and a note from the hand of Vercingetorix, I call you all to witness; and you whose whole life was a work of simulation; lying Smerdis, lying Neros, lying Maids of Orleans, who would have deceived the very brothers of Joan of Arc; lying Martin Guerre, lying Demetrius and fictitious Dukes of Normandy; I call you to witness, workers of spells, makers of miracles that seduced the mob: Simon the Magician, Apollonius of Tyana, Cagliostro, Comte de Saint-Germain; I call you to witness, travellers returning from far-off countries, who had every facility for lying and took full advantage of it; you who beheld the Cyclopes and the Læstrygones, the Magnetic Mountain, the Roc and the Fish-Bishop; and you, Sir John Maundeville, who saw in Asia devils vomiting fire; and you, makers of stories and fables and tales—Mother Goose, Tyl Eulenspiegel, Baron Munchausen!—and you, chivalrous and picturesque Spaniards, most notable babblers, I call you to witness! Bear witness, all of you! You have not accumulated, in the long course of the centuries, so many lies as Jean Coq and Jean Mouton read in their newspapers in a single day! And after that, how can we be surprised that they have so many bogies in their heads!"

CHAPTER XXI

INDING himself implicated in the proceedings instituted against the authors of the plot against the Republic, Joseph Lacrisse put his person and his papers in a safe place. The police commissary whose duty it was to seize the correspondence of the Royalist Committee was too much of a gentleman not to give the members of the Committee due notice of his visit. He gave them twenty-four hours' warning, thus bringing his natural courtesy into line with his legitimate anxiety to do his duty properly, for in common with the majority he believed that the Republican Ministry would soon be overthrown, and that a Ribot or Méline Cabinet would take its place. When he appeared at the headquarters of the Committee all the drawers and pigeon-holes were empty. They were sealed by the magistrate. He also sealed a Bottin for 1897, an automobile catalogue, a packet of cigarettes and a fancing glove which were found on the mantelpiece. In this manner he obeyed the legal formalities, on which we must congratulate him;

one should always observe the legal formalities. His name was Jonquille. He was a distinguished magistrate and a clever man; in his youth he had composed songs for cafés-concerts. One of his works, *Les Cancrelats dans le pain,* achieved a great success at the Champs-Élysées in 1885.

After the surprise caused by these unexpected proceedings, Joseph Lacrisse reassured himself. He soon saw that the conspirators under the present Government run less risk than under the First Empire or the Monarchy, and that the Third Republic is by no means bloodthirsty. Madame de Bonmont alone looked upon him as a victim, loving him the more for it, for she was generous. She showed her love by tears and sobs and fits of nerves, so that he spent a never-to-be-forgotten fortnight with her in Brussels. This was the extent of his exile. He benefited by one of the first verdicts pronounced by the Supreme Court. I do not complain of this, and if it had listened to me the Supreme Court would have condemned no one. Since they dared not prosecute all the offenders, it was not in very good taste to condemn only those of whom they were least afraid; to condemn them, moreover, for actions that were not, or at any rate did not seem, sufficiently distinguished from the actions for which they had already been prosecuted. Again, that the only persons implicated in an Army plot should have been civilians

might well appear strange. To all of which some excellent people have replied: "People must do the best they can for themselves." Joseph Lacrisse had lost none of his energy. He was ready to mend the broken threads of the plot, but that was soon recognized to be impossible, although the majority of the police commissaries who had received search warrants would have treated the Royalists with the same delicacy as Monsieur Jonquille. The irony of chance or the imprudence of the conspirators placed in their hands, in spite of themselves, enough documentary evidence to reveal the secret organization of the Committees to the Attorney-General of the Republic. They could no longer plot in safety, and had lost all hope of seeing the King return with the swallows.

Madame de Bonmont sold the six white horses she had bought with the intention of offering them to the Prince for his entry into Paris by the Avenue des Champs-Élysées. At the instigation of her brother Wallstein she sold them to Monsieur Gilbert, the director of the National Circus at the Trocadero. Nor had she the anguish of selling them at a loss; she even made a little profit on them. But the tears fell from her beautiful eyes when the six lily-white chargers left her stables, never to return. She felt as though they were harnessed to the funeral car of that Royalty whom they were to have drawn in triumph.

However, the Supreme Court, which had investigated the affair with languid curiosity, was still sitting.

One day at Madame de Bonmont's house young Lacrisse permitted himself the natural satisfaction of cursing the jury that had acquitted him while still retaining some of the accused men in custody.

"What bandits they are!" he cried.

"Ah," sighed Madame de Bonmont, "the Senate is in the pay of the Ministry. It is a frightful Government. Monsieur Méline would never have undertaken this abominable prosecution. He was a Republican, but he was an honest man. Had he remained in power, the King would be in France to-day."

"Alas, the King is far away from France to-day," said Henri Léon, who had never had many illusions.

Joseph Lacrisse shook his head, and a long silence ensued.

"It's perhaps a good thing for you," said Henri Léon.

"How so?"

"I say that in a way it is rather to your advantage, Lacrisse, that the King is in exile. You ought to be delighted, allowing, of course, for your patriotic feelings."

"I don't understand."

"It's very simple. If you were a financier like

myself, the return of the Monarchy might have been profitable to you, if it were only for the Coronation loan. The King would have raised a loan shortly after his accession, for the dear man would have needed money to reign with. There would have been a good deal to be made out of the business for me; but what would you, an advocate, have gained by the Restoration? A prefecture? A lot of good that would be! You can do better than that as a Royalist under the Republic. You speak exceedingly well—don't deny it—you speak with facility, gracefully. You are one of the twenty-five or thirty members of the junior bar whom Nationalism has brought into prominence. You can believe me. I'm not saying it to flatter you. A good speaker has everything to gain by keeping the King out of the country. With Philippe at the Élysée you would be given some post in the Government or Administration, and that sort of thing quickly does for a man. If you take up the people's interests you displease the King, and out you go. If you devote yourself to the King's interests the people complain, and the King dismisses you. He makes mistakes, and you make them, but you are punished for both; popular or unpopular, you are done for inevitably. But as long as the King is in exile you can do no wrong. You can do nothing; you have no responsibility! It is an excellent state of affairs. You need fear neither

popularity nor unpopularity, you are above the one and the other. You cannot blunder; no blunder is possible to the defender of a lost cause. The advocate of misfortune is always eloquent. When hope has become impossible, you can be a Royalist with impunity in a Republic. You offer a calm opposition to those in power; you are liberal; you have the sympathy of all enemies of the existing system, and the respect of the Government which you harmlessly oppose. As a servant of the fallen Monarchy the veneration with which you kneel at the feet of your King will emphasize the nobility of your character, and without loss of dignity you can lavish upon him every sort of flattery. In the same way you can, without any inconvenience, read the Prince a lesson, speak to him with brusque frankness, reproach him for his abdications, his alliances, his private counsellors; you can say to him, for example: 'Monseigneur, I must warn you, with due respect, that you are keeping low company.' The papers will seize upon these noble words; the fame of your devotion will increase, and you will dominate your own party from the lofty altitudes in which your soul is able to breathe. Advocate or Deputy, at the Palais or from the tribune, you will strike the noblest of attitudes; you are incorruptible, and the good Fathers will protect you. Come, realize your good fortune, Lacrisse."

"What you say may be funny, Léon," replied Lacrisse coldly, "but I don't find it so. And I doubt whether your jokes are at all relevant."

"I am not joking."

"Yes, you are. You are a sceptic, and I loathe scepticism. It is the negation of action. I am all for action, always, and in spite of all."

Henri Léon protested:

"I assure you I am very much in earnest."

"Well then, my friend, I am sorry to tell you that you don't in the least understand the spirit of your age. You have described a worthy of the type of Berryer. He would seem like a man stepped out of a family portrait. Your Royalist might have passed muster under the Second Empire, but I can assure you that to-day he would appear *vieux jeu* and devilishly out of date. The faithful courtier would be simply absurd in the twentieth century. One has no business to be beaten, and the weak are always in the wrong. That is the way we look at things, my dear fellow. Are we for Poland, or Greece, or Finland? No, no; we don't dance to that tune. We are not simpletons. We shouted 'Vivent les Boers,' it's true. But we knew what we were about. We wanted to worry the Government by stirring up trouble with England, and also we hoped that the Boers would win. However, I'm not discouraged. I have reason

to hope that we shall overthrow the Republic with the help of the Republicans.

"What we can't do alone we shall do with Nationalists of every shade of opinion. With them we'll make an end of the Republic. And to begin with we must bring off the municipal elections."

CHAPTER XXII

OSEPH LACRISSE had spoken the truth when he called himself a man of action. Idleness was a burden to him. The Secretary of an extinct Royalist Committee, he became a member of a Nationalist Committee, which was very much alive. It was violent in tone, full of a malevolent love of France and a destructive patriotism. It was continually organizing rather savage demonstrations in the theatres or the churches. Joseph Lacrisse was the moving spirit of these demonstrations. When they took place in a church, Madame de Bonmont, who was religiously inclined, attended them, dressed in dark colours. *Domus mea domus orationis*. One day after joining the Nationalists in the Cathedral in order to pray in select company, Madame de Bonmont and Lacrisse mingled with a crowd of men in the square before the Cathedral who were expressing their patriotism by frantic and concerted shouts. Lacrisse joined his voice to that of the crowd, and Madame de Bonmont quickened

their courage by the smile of her blue eyes and her rosy lips, gleaming behind her veil.

The noise was magnificent and formidable, and it was growing even louder when, on an order from the prefecture, a squad of police marched upon the demonstrators. Lacrisse watched them approaching without surprise, and as soon as they were within hearing he shouted, "Hurrah for the police!"

This enthusiasm was not lacking in prudence, and it was also sincere. Bonds of friendship had been formed between the brigades of the prefecture and the Nationalist demonstrators in the ever-to-be-regretted times, if I may say so, of the ploughman Minister who allowed cudgel-bearing roughs to club the silent Republicans in the streets. That is what he called acting with moderation. O gentle country customs! O primitive simplicity! O happy days! Who knew you not never knew the meaning of life! O simplicity of the man of the open fields, who vowed that the Republic had no enemies! Where were the Royalist conspirators and seditious monks? There were none. He had hidden them all under his long Sunday-go-to-meeting coat. Joseph Lacrisse had not forgotten those happy days, and relying on the old alliance of rioters and police he cheered the black brigades. Standing in the front rank of the Leaguers he waved his hat on the end of his stick in token of peace, shouting twenty times over,

"Hurrah for the police!" But times had changed. Indifferent to this friendly welcome, deaf to these flattering shouts, the police charged. The shock was violent. The Nationalist ranks wavered and fell back. Human affairs are subject to time's revenges. Lacrisse, who had stopped cheering the attackers and had replaced his hat on his head, found it knocked over his eyes by a vigorous blow. Indignant at the insult he broke his stick over a policeman's head, and had it not been for the efforts of friends who came to his assistance he would have been marched off to the police station and thrown into a cell like a Socialist.

The policeman whose head was cracked was taken to the hospital, where he received a silver medal from the prefect of police.

Joseph Lacrisse was chosen by the Nationalist Committee for the ward of the Grandes-Écuries as their candidate at the municipal elections of the 6th of May.

This was the former Committee of Monsieur Collinard, a Conservative who had been blackballed at the preceding elections, and was not standing on this occasion. The president of the Committee, Monsieur Bonnaud, a pork-butcher, undertook to assure Joseph Lacrisse of a triumphant return.

Raimondin, a Radical Republican, the retiring councillor, wished to be re-elected, but the electors

had lost their faith in him. He had disappointed every one, and had neglected the interests of his ward. He had not even obtained the tramway which had been demanded for the last twelve years, and was even accused of favouring the Dreyfusards.

It was an excellent ward. The householders were all Nationalists, and the tradespeople severely condemned the Waldeck-Millerand Cabinet. There were some Jews among them, but they were anti-Semites. The religious communities, which were both rich and numerous, would do their best, and the Fathers who had opened the Chapel of Saint-Antoine were especially to be relied upon. Success was certain. It was merely necessary that Monsieur Lacrisse should not expressly and in so many words announce himself as a Royalist, in order to spare the feelings of the small shopkeepers, who feared a change of regime, particularly during the Exhibition.

Lacrisse objected to this. He was a Royalist and did not intend to put his colours in his pocket. Monsieur Bonnaud stuck to his point. He knew the elector. He knew what sort of animal he was, and how to manage him. If Monsieur Lacrisse would come forward as a Nationalist he, Bonnaud, would win the election for him. Otherwise the thing was impossible.

Joseph Lacrisse was puzzled, and wondered whether he should write to the King about the mat-

ter. But time pressed, and, besides, how could Philippe at such a distance be a competent judge of his own interests? Lacrisse consulted his friends.

"Our strength lies in our principles," replied Henri Léon. "A Monarchist cannot call himself a Republican, even during the Exhibition. But they are not asking you to call yourself a Republican. They do not even ask you to call yourself a Republican Progressive, or a Republican Liberal, which is quite another thing than a Republican. They are asking you to call yourself a Nationalist. You can do that in all honesty, for you are a Nationalist. Don't hesitate. Success depends upon it, and it is of importance to the good cause that you should be elected."

Joseph Lacrisse gave in out of patriotism, writing to the Prince to explain the situation and to assure him of his devotion.

The terms of the programme were drawn up without difficulty. The National Army was to be defended against a mob of maniacs. Cosmopolitanism was to be combated. Paternal rights, jeopardized by the Government's proposal in respect of the Universities, were to be upheld. The peril of Collectivism was to be averted. A tramway was to connect the Grandes-Écuries with the Exhibition. The banner of France was to be held high, and the water supply improved.

There was no question of a plebiscite; people did not know what it was in the Grandes-Écuries ward. Joseph Lacrisse had not the trouble of reconciling his doctrine, which was that of Divine Right, with the doctrine of the Sovereignty of the People. Though he admired and loved Déroulède, he did not blindly follow him.

"I will have tricolour posters," he said to Monsieur Bonnaud. "It will look well, and we must neglect nothing that will take the people's fancy."

Bonnaud approved of this; but Raimondin, the retiring councillor, having managed to secure, at the last moment, the establishment of a steam-tramway from the Grandes-Écuries to the Trocadero, was publishing broadcast the news of his success. He, too, praised the Army in his circulars, and spoke of the wonders of the Exhibition as the triumph of the industrial and commercial genius of France and the glory of Paris. He was becoming a formidable rival.

Feeling that the struggle would be a hard one, the Nationalists did everything in their power to stimulate the courage of their adherents. They accused Raimondin, at innumerable meetings, of having allowed his old mother to die of starvation and of having voted that the municipality should subscribe for Urbain Gohier's book.

Every night they attacked Raimondin, the candidate of the Jews and Panamists. A group of Re-

publican Progressives was formed to support Joseph Lacrisse, and published the following manifesto:

To the Electors

"GENTLEMEN,

"The critical circumstances through which we are now passing make it our duty to ask of the candidates at the forthcoming municipal elections a statement of their opinion as to the general policy, on which the future of the country depends. At an hour when some deluded persons entertain the criminal hope of stirring up an unseemly agitation calculated to weaken our beloved country, at an hour when Collectivism, audaciously installed in power, threatens our property, the sacred fruit of our thrift and labour; at an hour when a Government established against public opinion is preparing tyrannical laws, you will all vote for

"M. JOSEPH LACRISSE,

"Advocate in the Court of Appeal,

"Candidate for the Liberty of Conscience of an honest Republic."

The Nationalist Socialists of the ward had thought at first of choosing their own candidates, whose votes, at the second scrutiny, would have gone to Lacrisse, but the danger was so imminent as to necessitate union. So the Nationalist Socialists of the Grandes-Écuries rallied round Lacrisse, and made the following appeal to the electors:

"CITIZENS,

"We commend to you the definitely Republican, Socialist and Nationalist candidate,

"CITIZEN LACRISSE.

"Down with the traitors! Down with the Dreyfusards! Down with the Panamists! Down with the Jews! Long live the National-Socialist Republic!"

The Fathers, who possessed a chapel and an enormous amount of house-property in the ward, strictly refrained from meddling in electoral affairs. They were too obedient to the Sovereign Pontiff to infringe his orders, and absorption in the works of piety kept them far removed from mundane affairs. But some of their lay friends composed a circular which exactly expressed the thoughts of the worthy Fathers. Here is the text of this circular, which was distributed throughout the ward:

"The Charity of ST. ANTHONY, for the restoration of lost property, jewels, valuables and objects of every description, such as land, houses, furniture, money, feelings, affections, etc., etc.

"GENTLEMEN,

"It is chiefly during elections that the devil attempts to trouble our consciences. And to attain this object he has recourse to innumerable devices. Alas, has he not in his service the whole army of the Freemasons? But you will know how to defeat the

wiles of the enemy. You will reject with horror and disgust the candidate of the incendiaries, the burners of churches and other Dreyfusards.

"It is only by placing righteous men in power that you will put an end to the abominable persecution which is so cruelly being undertaken at the present moment, and will prevent an iniquitous Government from laying its hands upon the money of the poor. Vote for

"M. JOSEPH LACRISSE,
"Advocate in the Court of Appeal,
"St. Anthony's Candidate.

"Gentlemen, do not grieve the good St. Anthony by inflicting upon him the unmerited grief of seeing his candidate defeated.

"Signed: Ribagou, advocate; Wertheimer, publicist; Florimond, architect; Bèche, retired captain; Molon, artisan."

These documents will suffice to show to what intellectual and moral heights Nationalism elevated the discussion of the candidates for the Municipal Council of Paris.

CHAPTER XXIII

OSEPH LACRISSE, the Nationalist candidate, was carrying on an active campaign in the Grandes-Écuries ward against the outgoing councillor, Anselme Raimondin. From the first he felt at his ease in the public meetings at which he spoke. Being a lawyer and very ignorant, he spoke profusely, and nothing ever stopped him. The rapidity of his delivery astonished the electors, with whom he was in sympathy because of the scarcity and simplicity of his ideas, and what he said was always what they would have said themselves, or at least would have tried to say. He was always speaking of his honesty, and of the honesty of his political friends; he insisted that they must elect honest men, and that his party was the party of honest men. As it was a new party, the people believed him.

Anselme Raimondin, at his meetings, replied that he himself was honest, extremely honest, but his protestations, coming after the others, seemed tedious. Since he had already been a councillor and had

experience of municipal affairs, the electors did not find it easy to believe in his honesty, whereas Joseph Lacrisse was dazzling in his innocence.

Lacrisse was young, brisk, and had a soldierly appearance. Raimondin was short and stout, and wore spectacles. This difference was remarked upon at a moment when Nationalism had breathed into municipal elections some of the enthusiasm and poetry which are inseparable from it, together with an ideal of beauty perceptible to the small shopkeeper.

Joseph Lacrisse was totally ignorant of all questions concerning civic affairs, even to the attributions of municipal councils. This ignorance was useful to him. His eloquence was thereby the freer and more stirring. Anselme Raimondin, on the contrary, lost himself in the mazes of detail. He was accustomed to the use of business expressions, and to technical discussions; he had a love of figures, and a passion for documents, and although he knew his public he laboured under certain illusions with regard to the intelligence of the electors who had nominated him. He had a certain amount of respect for them; he dared not lie too grossly, and did his best to enter into explanations. All this made him appear cold, obscure and tedious.

He was no simpleton. He knew where lay his interests, and he understood minor politics. For

two years his district had been submerged by Nationalist newspapers, posters and pamphlets; and he told himself that when the moment came he, too, could pretend to be a Nationalist, that it wasn't so difficult to demolish traitors and acclaim the National Army. He had not feared his enemies sufficiently, thinking that he could always do as they did, in which he was mistaken. Joseph Lacrisse had an inimitable genius for expressing the Nationalist ideal. He had hit upon one special sentence which he frequently employed, and which always seemed new and beautiful. It was this: "Citizens, let us all rise to defend our admirable Army against a handful of cosmopolitans who have sworn to destroy it." This was just the thing to say to the electors of the Grandes-Écuries. Repeated nightly, the sentence aroused the whole meeting to great and formidable enthusiasm. Anselme Raimondin did not hit upon anything nearly so good; if patriotic phrases occurred to him he did not deliver them in the right tone, and they produced no effect.

Lacrisse covered the walls with tricolour posters. Anselme Raimondin also made use of tricolour posters, but either the colours were too washy or the sun faded them; at all events, his posters had a pallid appearance. Everything played him false, every one abandoned him. He lost his assurance; he humbled himself, showed himself prudent and

humble. He shrank from notice; he became almost imperceptible.

Again, when he stood up to speak in the dancing-hall of some third-rate drinking-house he seemed like a pale phantom from which proceeded a feeble voice drowned by pipe-smoke and the interruptions of the audience. He recalled his past. He had always been a fighter, he said. He stood up for the Republic; this remark, like the preceding one, caused no sensation, had no sonorous echo. The electors of the Grandes-Écuries ward wanted the Republic to be defended by Joseph Lacrisse, who had conspired against her. That was what they wanted.

The meeting did not discuss both sides of the question. Only once was Raimondin invited to put in an appearance at a Nationalist meeting. He went; but he was not allowed to speak; and was utterly crushed by a resolution put and carried amid darkness and disorder, for the landlord had cut off the gas as soon as the people started breaking up the benches. The meetings in the Grandes-Écuries ward, as in all the other wards of Paris, were only moderately rowdy. The people now and then displayed the languid violence peculiar to their day, which is the most noticeable characteristic of our political manners. The Nationalists, according to their habit, hurled forth the same monotonous insults in which the expressions "Spy," "Traitor" and

"Rogue" had a feeble, exhausted sound. Their slogans told of an extreme physical and moral enervation, a vague discontent combined with profound lethargy, and a definite inability to think out the simplest problems. There were many insults and few blows. It was unusual if more than two or three per night were wounded or knocked about, counting both parties. Lacrisse's wounded were taken to the Nationalist chemist Delapierre, next door to the riding-school, and Raimondin's to the Radical chemist Job, opposite the market-place, and by midnight there was not a soul left in the streets.

On Sunday, May the 6th, at six o'clock, Joseph Lacrisse, accompanied by his friends, was awaiting the result of the ballot in an empty shop decorated with flags and placards. This was their chief Committee Room. The pork-butcher, Monsieur Bonnaud, arrived, and announced that Lacrisse was elected by two thousand three hundred and nine votes against one thousand five hundred and fourteen for Monsieur Raimondin.

"Citizen," said Bonnaud, "we are much gratified. It is a victory for the Republic."

"And for honest men," replied Lacrisse, adding with dignified benevolence: "I thank you, Monsieur Bonnaud, and I beg you to thank in my name our valiant friends." Then, turning to Henri Léon

who stood beside him, he whispered, "Léon, do me a favour, will you? Wire our success at once to Monseigneur."

Shouts were heard from the street.

"Long live Déroulède! Long live the Army! Long live the Republic! Down with the Jews!"

Lacrisse entered his carriage amid the cheers of the crowd that barred his passage. Baron Golsberg the Jew, was standing at the carriage door; he seized the new councillor's hand:

"I gave you my vote, Monsieur Lacrisse. You understand, I gave you my vote, because, I tell you, anti-Semitism is mere humbug—you know it as well as I do—mere humbug, while Socialism is a serious matter."

"Yes, yes. Good-bye, Monsieur Golsberg."

But the Baron still held on.

"Socialism is the danger. Monsieur Raimondin favoured concessions to the Collectivists. That's why I voted for you, Monsieur Lacrisse."

And still the crowd yelled:

"Hurrah for Déroulède! Hurrah for the Army! Down with the Dreyfusards! Down with Raimondin! Death to the Jews!"

The coachman succeeded in making a way through the mass of electors.

Joseph Lacrisse found Madame de Bonmont at

home, alone. She was excited and triumphant, having already heard the news.

"Elected!" she cried, her arms extended and her gaze directed heavenward.

And the word "elected" on the lips of so pious a lady seemed full of mystical meaning.

She put her beautiful arms around him and drew him to her.

"What makes me happiest is that you owe your election to me."

She had contributed nothing to his expenses. It is true that money had not been wanting, and Joseph Lacrisse had drawn upon more than one banking account; but the gentle Elisabeth had given nothing, and Joseph Lacrisse could not understand what she meant. She explained herself:

"I had a candle burnt every day before St. Anthony; that is why you got in. St. Anthony grants all requests. Father Adéodat told me so, and I have proved it several times."

She covered his face with kisses, and a beautiful idea occurred to her, which reminded her of the customs of chivalry.

"My dear," she asked him, "do not municipal councillors wear a scarf? an embroidered scarf, isn't it? I'll embroider one for you."

He was very tired and fell exhausted into a chair, but kneeling at his feet she murmured:

"I love you."

And only the darkness heard the rest.

. . . . . .

The same evening, in his modest apartments—the apartments of "a child of the quarter," as he called them—Anselme Raimondin heard the result of the election. There were some dozen bottles of wine and a cold *pâté* on the dining-room table. His failure amazed him.

"It was only what I expected," he said.

And he swung round in a pirouette, but he was clumsy and twisted his ankle.

"It's your own fault," said Dr. Maufle, by way of consolation. The Doctor was president of his Committee, an old Radical, with the face of a Silenus. "You allowed the Nationalists to poison the whole ward; you hadn't the pluck to stand up against them. You made no attempt to unmask their falsehoods. On the contrary, like them, with them, you told every lie you could think of. You knew the truth, and you dared not undeceive the electors while there was still time. You've funked it, and you are beaten, and it serves you right!"

Anselme Raimondin shrugged his shoulders.

"You are a silly old fool, Maufle. You don't understand the ins and outs of this election. Yet it's clear enough. My failure was due to one thing only: the discontent of the small shopkeepers who

are being crushed out of existence between the big shops and the co-operative societies. They are suffering and they made me pay for it. That's all."

Then, with a faint smile, he added:

"They'll find themselves nicely taken in."

CHAPTER XXIV

EETING his pupils Goubin and Denis, on one of the paths of the Luxembourg garden, Monsieur Bergeret said:

"I have good news for you, gentlemen. The peace of Europe will not be disturbed. The Trublions themselves have assured me of it."

And Monsieur Bergeret went on to relate the following story:

"I met Jean Coq, Jean Mouton, Jean Laiglon and Gilles Singe at the Exhibition, where they were listening to the creaking of the footbridges. Jean Coq came up to me, and said sternly: 'Monsieur Bergeret, you said that we wanted war, and that we should make war, that Jean Mouton and I were going to land at Dover with an army and occupy London, and that then I should take Berlin and various other capitals. You said this, I know. You said it with malicious intent to harm us and make the French nation believe that we desire war. Understand, monsieur, that this is a lie. Our tendencies are not war-like; they are military, which is quite

another thing. We desire peace, and when we have established the Imperial Republic in France we shall not go to war.'

"I told Jean Coq that I was quite ready to believe him, and, what was more, that I saw that I had been mistaken and that my mistake was obvious; that Jean Coq, Jean Mouton, Jean Laiglon and Gilles Singe had sufficiently proved their love of peace by refusing to go and fight in China, whither they had been invited by beautiful white placards. 'From that time forth,' said I, 'I realized the truly civil nature of your military sentiments, and the strength of your love for your country. You could not leave the soil of France. I beg you to accept my apologies, Monsieur Coq. I rejoice to see that you are as peacefully disposed as I.'

"Jean Coq looked at me with that eye that causes the world to tremble: 'I am peacefully disposed, Monsieur Bergeret, but, thank God, not as you are. The peace I desire is not your peace. You are slavishly content with the peace that is forced upon us to-day. Our spirit is too great to endure it without impatience. This feeble enervating peace which satisfies you, cruelly wounds the pride of our hearts. When we are the masters we shall make another peace; a terrible, clanking, spurred and booted, equestrian peace! We shall make a pitiless, savage peace, a threatening, horrible, blazing peace; a

peace worthy of us; a peace which, more frightful than the most frightful war, will freeze the world with terror and kill all the English by inhibition. That, Monsieur Bergeret, is our manner of being pacific. In two or three months' time our peace will burst upon the world and will set it in a blaze.'

"After this speech I was forced to admit that the Trublions were peacefully disposed, and thus was confirmed the truth of the oracle written upon an ancient sycamore leaf by the sibyl of Panzoust:

" 'Toi qui de vent te repais,
Troublion, ma petite outre,
Si vraiment tu veux la paix,
Commence par nous la f . . .' "

CHAPTER XXV

ADAME DE BONMONT'S *salon* had been unusually lively and brilliant since the victory of the Nationalists in Paris and the election of Joseph Lacrisse for the ward of the Grandes-Écuries. The widow of the great Baron received at her house the flower of the new party. An old Rabbi of the Faubourg St. Antoine believed that the gentle Elisabeth attracted to herself the enemies of the chosen people by a special decree of the God of Israel. The hand, he thought, that placed Esther in the bed of Ahasuerus had been pleased to gather together the chiefs of the anti-Semites and the princes of the Trublions in the house of a Jewess. It is true that the Baronne had renounced the faith of her fathers, but who can fathom the designs of Jehovah! In the eyes of the artists, who, like Frémont, bethought themselves of the mythological figures in the palaces of Germany, her sumptuous beauty, the beauty of a Viennese Erigone, seemed symbolical of the Nationalist vintage.

Her dinners diffused an atmosphere of delight and

power, and the smallest luncheon party at her house had a truly national significance. Thus, this morning she had gathered together at her table the most famous defenders of the Church and Army. There was Henri Léon, Vice-Prèsident of the Royalist Committees of the South-West, who had come to congratulate the Nationalists elected in Paris; Captain de Chalmot, the son of General Cartier de Chalmot, with his young American wife, who twittered to such an extent as she expressed her Nationalist propensities that one would have thought the very birds in their cages were taking part in our human disputes; Monsieur Tonnellier, the suspended professor of the fifth form at the Lycée Sully, who, as every one knows, had been convicted of defending, to his young pupils, an assault committed upon the person of the President of the Republic, had been condemned to pay a fine and was forthwith received in the best society, where he behaved very well, except that he was rather given to playing upon words; Frémont, an old Communard and an Inspector of the Fine Arts, who as he grew older became wonderfully reconciled to bourgeois and capitalist society, assiduously frequenting the houses of wealthy Jews, the guardians of the treasures of Christian art, and would gladly have lived under the dictatorship of a horse so long as he could spend the day caressing, with his delicate hands, finely wrought

bibelots of precious material; and the old Comte Davant, dyed, waxed and varnished, handsome still, a trifle morose, who remembered the golden age of the Jews when he supplied the great financiers with furniture by Riesener and bronzes by Thomyres. When acting as the Baron's collector he had gathered together fifteen millions' worth of old furniture and objects of art. To-day, ruined by unfortunate speculation, he lived among the sons, regretting the fathers, a sad, bitter old man, one of the most insolent of parasites, insolence, as he well knew, being a parasite's main passport to favour. She had also invited Jacques de Cadde, one of the promoters of the Henry subscription list; Philippe Dellion, Astolphe de Courtrai, Hugues Chassons des Aigues, President of the Nationalist Committee of Celle-Saint-Cloud, and Jambe-d'Argent in breeches and waistcoat of homespun, the white armlet with the golden lilies on his arm, and a wild shock of hair under his round hat, which, like his chaplet of olive-stones, he never removed. He was a Montmartre singer, by name Dupont, who having become a Chouan was received in the best society. He was taking a snack, with an old flint-gun between his legs, drinking copiously. Since the Affair a new classification had occurred in aristocratic French Society.

Young Baron Ernest sat facing his mother in the

chair set for the master of the house. The conversation turned on politics.

"You are wrong," said Jacques de Cadde to Philippe Dellion. "Believe me, you are wrong not to employ Father François' move. No one knows what may happen after the Exhibition and as soon as we begin to hold public meetings."

"One thing is certain," said Astolphe de Courtrai, "and that is if we want to do well in the elections in twenty months' time we must prepare to begin a campaign. I can promise you that I shall be ready, I'm working hard every day at boxing and single-stick."

"Who's your trainer?" asked Dellion.

"Gaudibert. He has brought French boxing to perfection. It's astonishing. He has some exquisite foot-work, some *coups de savate,* quite of his own. He's a first-class teacher, and understands the tremendous importance of training."

"Training is everything," said Jacques de Cadde.

"Of course," continued Courtrai. "And Gaudibert has superior methods of training, a whole system, based on experience. Massage, friction and dieting followed by plenty of nourishment. His motto is: 'Keep down fat, build up muscle.' And in six months, my friends, he makes you a first-rate boxer, and gives your punch an elasticity and your kick a suppleness——"

Madame de Chalmot inquired:

"Can you overthrow this feeble Ministry?"

And at the bare idea of the Waldeck Cabinet she indignantly shook her pretty head—the head of an infant Samuel.

"Do not distress yourself, madame," said Lacrisse. "This Ministry will be replaced by another just like it."

"Another Ministry of Republican spendthrifts," said Monsieur Tonnellier. "France will be ruined."

"Yes," said Léon, "another Ministry just like this one. But the new Ministry will be less unpopular, for it will no longer be the Ministry of the Affair. We shall need a campaign of at least six weeks with all our newspapers to make it hateful to the people."

"Have you been to the Petit Palais, madame?" said Frémont to the Baronne.

She replied that she had been there and had seen some beautiful caskets and some pretty dance-engagement books.

"Émile Moliner," replied the Inspector of Fine Arts, "has organized an admirable exhibition of French art. The Middle Ages are represented by the most valuable examples. The eighteenth century takes an honourable position too, but there is still space to fill up. You, madame, who possess so

many treasures will not refuse us the loan of some of your masterpieces."

It is true that the great Baron had left his widow many art treasures. For him the Comte Davant had ransacked all the provincial châteaux on the banks of the Somme, Loire and Rhône, and had wrested from ignorant, needy and whiskered gentlemen portraits of ancestors, historic furniture, gifts from kings to their mistresses, imposing souvenirs of the Monarchy, the treasured possessions of the most illustrious families. In her castle at Montil and her house in the Avenue Marceau she had examples of the work of the finest French cabinet-makers and of the greatest wood-carvers of the eighteenth century: chests of drawers, cabinets for medals, secretaries, clocks of all descriptions, candlesticks and exquisite faded tapestries. But although Frémont, and Terremondre before him, had begged her to send some pieces of furniture, bronzes or hangings to the coming Exhibition, she had always refused. Vain of her riches and anxious to display them she had not intended, on this occasion, to lend anything. Joseph Lacrisse encouraged her in this refusal: "Have nothing to do with their Exhibition. Your things will be stolen or burned. And who knows if they will ever succeed in organizing their international fair? It's better to have nothing to do with people like that."

Frémont, who had already been refused on several occasions, persisted:

"You, madame, who possess such beautiful things and are so worthy of possessing them, show yourself to be what you are, liberal, generous and patriotic, for patriotism also is involved in this matter. Send to the Petit Palais your Riesener cabinet decorated with Sèvres in *pâte tendre*. With such a treasure you need fear no rival, for its equal is only to be found in England. We will put upon it your porcelain vases, which belonged to the Grand Dauphin, those two marvellous sea-green vases mounted in bronze by Caffieri. It will be dazzling!"

The Comte Davant interrupted him:

"The mounts," he said in a tone of melancholy wisdom, "are not by Philippe Caffieri. They are marked with a 'C' surmounted by a lily. That is Cressent's mark. You may not know it, but you cannot deny it."

"Madame, display your magnificence! Add to this your tapestry by Leprince, *La Fiancée moscovite*, and you will deserve the gratitude of the whole nation."

She was ready to give way. But before consenting she questioned Lacrisse with a look. He said:

"Lend them your eighteenth-century stuff, as they have none."

Then, out of deference to the Comte Davant, she asked him what she should do. He replied:

"Do as you like. I have no advice to give you. It will be all the same whether you send or do not send your things to the Exhibition. *Rien ne fait rien,* as my old friend Théophile Gautier used to say."

"That's done!" thought Frémont. "I'll go presently and tell the Ministry that I've managed to secure the Bonmont collection. It's well worth the rosette."

And he smiled to himself. He was no fool, but he did not despise social distinctions, and it struck him as piquant that a man who had been imprisoned as a Communard should be made an officer of the Legion of Honour.

"I must go," said Lacrisse. "I've got to prepare the speech for the banquet of the Grandes-Écuries next Sunday."

"Oh," sighed the Baronne, "I shouldn't trouble to do that. It's not necessary, you extemporize so wonderfully."

"Besides, my dear fellow," said Jacques de Cadde, "it's not a difficult matter to address electors."

"Not difficult exactly," said the chosen candidate, "but delicate. Our enemies complain that we have no programme. That is not true, we have a programme, but——"

"Pheasant shooting, that's the programme, messieurs," said Jambe-d'Argent.

"But the elector," continued Joseph Lacrisse, "is of a more complex nature than one would at first suppose. For instance, I've been elected to the Grandes-Écuries by the Monarchists, of course, and by the Bonapartists, and also by the—what shall I call them?—by the Republicans who are sick of the Republic but who still remain Republicans. That is a state of mind not infrequently met with in Paris among the small tradespeople. Thus the pork-butcher who presides over my Committee shouts in my face: 'I've done with the Republic of the Republicans. If I could, I'd blow it up, even if I had to blow up with it; but for your Republic, Monsieur Lacrisse, I would lay down my life for it.' Doubtless there are points on which we all agree. For instance: 'Rally round the flag.' 'No attacks on the Army!' 'Down with the traitors in the pay of the foreigner who work to the undoing of our national defence!' There we are on common ground."

"Then there is also anti-Semitism," said Henri Léon.

"Anti-Semitism," replied Joseph Lacrisse, "is very popular in the Grandes-Écuries because there are so many rich Jews in the ward who are on our side."

"And the anti-masonic campaign!" cried Jacques de Cadde, who was religious.

"All of us in the Grandes-Écuries are agreed to fight the Freemasons," replied Joseph Lacrisse. "The church-goers reproach them for not being Catholics. The Nationalist Socialists reproach them for not being anti-Semites, and all our meetings adjourn to the cry of 'Down with the Freemasons!' to which Citizen Bissolo yells: 'Down with the Cassocks!' Immediately he is knocked on the head, thrown down, trampled upon by our friends and dragged off to the police-station by the police. The spirit of the Grandes-Écuries is excellent, but there are false ideas which we shall have to eliminate. The small shopkeeper does not yet understand that the Monarchy alone will bring him any happiness. He does not yet feel that in bowing to the will of the Church he increases his own stature. The shopkeeper's mind has been poisoned by bad books and bad newspapers. He is against the abuses of the clergy and the intrusion of priests into politics. Many of my electors call themselves anti-clerical."

"Really?" cried Madame de Bonmont, saddened and surprised.

"Madame," said Jacques de Cadde, "it is the same in the provinces. And I call that being against religion. Anti-clericalism spells anti-religion."

"We must not attempt to disguise the fact,"

Lacrisse continued. "We have still a great deal to do. And how? This is what we have to find out."

"As far as I am concerned," said Jacques de Cadde, "I am in favour of violent measures."

"What measures?" asked Henri Léon.

There was a moment's silence, and Henri Léon continued:

"We have had prodigious successes—but so had Boulanger, and he wore himself out."

"He was worn out," said Lacrisse. "But we need not fear that we shall be worn out in the same way. The Republicans, who put up a very good defence against him, are defending themselves very badly against us."

"Besides," said Léon, "it is not our enemies that I fear; it's our friends. We have friends in the Chamber. And what are they doing? They haven't even provided us with a nice little ministerial crisis complicated by a nice little presidential crisis."

"That would have been desirable," said Lacrisse, "but it wasn't possible. If it had been possible Méline would have done it. We must be just. Méline does what he can."

"Then," said Léon, "we must wait patiently until the Republicans of the Senate and the Chamber make way for us. Is that your opinion, Lacrisse?"

"Ah," sighed Jacques de Cadde, "I regret the

days when we cracked one another's heads. Those were the good old days."

"They may return," said Henri Léon.

"Do you think they will?"

"Yes, by Jove, if we bring them back!"

"True!"

"We have numbers on our side, as General Mercier said. Let us act."

"Hurrah for Mercier!" cried Jambe-d'Argent.

"Let us act," repeated Henri Léon. "And let us lose no time about it. And, above all, let us be careful not to allow ourselves to get cold feet. Nationalism must be swallowed hot. As long as it is boiling it's a cordial. Cold, it's a drug."

"What do you mean—a drug?" demanded Lacrisse severely.

"A salutary drug, an efficacious remedy, a good medicine, but one that the patient will not swallow willingly nor with pleasure. We must not let the mixture settle. Shake the bottle before pouring out the dose, according to the precept of the wise chemist. At the present moment our Nationalist mixture, which has been well shaken, is of a beautiful pink colour, pleasant to look upon and of a slightly acid flavour which pleases the palate. If we let the bottle rest, the mixture will lose much of its colour and flavour. A sediment will form. The best will go to the bottom. The monarchical and clerical in-

gredients which enter into its composition will stick to the bottom, and the wily patient will leave three-quarters of it in the bottle. Shake it up, gentlemen, shake it up."

"What did I tell you?" cried young Cadde.

"It is easy to say 'shake it up,' but it must be done at the right time, otherwise you run the risk of upsetting the electors," objected Lacrisse.

"Oh," said Léon, "of course, if you are thinking of your re-election!"

"Who said I was thinking of it? I'm not!"

"You are right, one mustn't meet trouble so much more than half-way."

"What? Trouble? You think my electors will change their minds?"

"On the contrary, I fear they will not. They were discontented and they have elected you. They will be discontented again in four years' time, and then it will be with you. Would you like a word of advice, Lacrisse?"

"Go on."

"You were elected by two thousand votes."

"Two thousand three hundred and nine."

"Two thousand three hundred and nine. You cannot please two thousand three hundred and nine people. But you mustn't think only of the quantity, you must think of the quality too. You have among your electors a fair number of anti-clerical Repub-

licans, small shopkeepers and clerks. They are not the most intelligent."

Lacrisse, who had become an earnest person, replied slowly and thoughtfully:

"I will explain. They are Republicans, but, above all, they are patriots. They voted for a patriot whose ideas did not coincide with theirs, who did not think as they did on matters which they thought of secondary importance. Their conduct is perfectly honourable and I suppose you do not hesitate to approve of it."

"Certainly I approve of it, but, between ourselves, we may confess that they are not particularly bright."

"Not very bright!" replied Lacrisse bitterly. "Not very bright! I will not say that they are as bright as——" He searched his brain for the name of a brilliant man, but either he could not find one among his friends or his ungrateful memory refused the name he sought, or perhaps a natural malevolence caused him to reject each name that came into his mind. He did not finish his sentence, remarking rather crossly, "Anyway, I can't see what's the good of railing at them."

"I'm not railing at them. I only say they are less intelligent than your Monarchist and Catholic electors who worked for you with the good Fathers. Well, your interest as well as your duty is to work

for them, first of all because they think as you do, and also because you don't hoodwink the good Fathers, while one does hoodwink fools."

"That's a mistake, a profound mistake!" cried Joseph Lacrisse. "Anyone can see, my dear fellow, that you don't know the electors. But I know them! Fools are not more easily hoodwinked than others. They delude themselves, it's true, and they delude themselves at every moment; but one doesn't hoodwink them."

"Yes, yes, one does, only one must know how to set about it."

"Don't you believe it!" replied Lacrisse, with sincerity. Then, on second thoughts, "Anyhow, I don't want to hoodwink them."

"Who's asking you to? You must satisfy them. And you can do that easily enough. You don't see enough of Father Adéodat. He's a good adviser, and so moderate! He will tell you, with his shrewd smile, his hands tucked into his sleeves, 'Keep your majority. Content them. We shall not take offence at an occasional vote on the indefeasibility of the rights of man and the citizen, or even against the clergy thrusting themselves into the Government. At public meetings think of your Republican electors, and think of us in the Committees. It is there, in peace and silence, that good work is done. That the greater part of the Council occasionally shows

itself to be anti-clerical is an evil that we can bear with patience. But it is important that the large Committees should be profoundly religious. They will be more powerful than the Council itself; because an active compact minority is always worth more than a lifeless, confused majority."

"That, my dear Lacrisse, is what Father Adéodat will tell you. He is admirably patient and serene. When our friends come and tell him with a shudder: 'Oh, Father, what fresh abominations the Freemasons are preparing! Compulsory University training for office; Article 7; the law relating to associations! Horrible!'—the good Father smiles and says nothing. He says nothing, but this is what he thinks: 'We've been through worse than this. We went through '89 and '93, the suppression of religious communities and the sale of Church property. And does anyone imagine that in former days, under the most Christian Monarchy, we kept or increased our property without effort or struggle? If so, they know very little of French history. Our rich abbeys, our towns and villages, our serfs, our meadows and mills, our woods and our ponds, our justice and our jurisdiction—powerful enemies, lords, bishops and kings were incessantly striving to dispossess us of them. We had to defend by force or before the courts a field or a road one day, the next a castle or a gibbet. To preserve our riches from

the cupidity of secular power we had continually to produce those ancient charters of Clotaire and Dagobert, which the impious knowledge taught in the Government schools to-day calls forgeries. We pleaded for ten centuries against the king's servants. We have only been pleading thirty years against the justice of the Republic. And the people think we are growing weary! No, we are neither frightened nor discouraged. We have money and property. It is the inheritance of the poor. To keep and multiply it we count on two aids that will not fail us: the protection of God and the impotence of Parliament."

"Such are the thoughts which take shape beneath the shining pate of Father Adéodat. Lacrisse, you were Father Adéodat's candidate; you are his chosen one. Go and see him. He is a great politician and will give you good advice. He will teach you how to satisfy the pork-butcher who is a Republican and how to charm the umbrella-maker who is a Freethinker. Go and see Father Adéodat, see him again and again."

"I have spoken with him several times," said Lacrisse. "He is certainly very clever. These good Fathers have grown rich with surprising rapidity. They do a great deal of good in the ward."

"A great deal of good," repeated Henri Léon. "The whole of the enormous quadrilateral between

the Rue des Grandes-Écuries, the riding-school Baron Golsberg's hôtel and the outer boulevard belongs to them. They are working patiently at a gigantic scheme. They have undertaken to erect, in the heart of Paris, in your ward, my dear fellow, another Lourdes, an immense basilica which will draw millions of pilgrims yearly. In the meanwhile they are covering their huge holdings with house-property."

"I know that," said Lacrisse.

"I know it too," put in Frémont. "I know their architect, a man called Florimond, an extraordinary fellow. You know the good Fathers are organizing pilgrimages in France and abroad. Florimond, with his long hair and flowing beard, accompanies the pilgrims on their visits to the cathedrals. He's got the head of a master-mason of the thirteenth century. He gazes at the spires and belfries with ecstatic eyes. He explains arches in tierce-point and Christian symbolism to the ladies. He shows them Mary, the flower of the tree of Jesse, at the heart of the great rose windows. Tearfully, with sighs and prayers, he calculates the resistance of the walls. At the table d'hôte, where monks and pilgrims sit together, his face and hands, still grey with the dust of the old stones which he has embraced, bear witness to the faith of the Catholic artisan. He tells them his dream: 'That I, a humble workman,

may bring my stone to the building of the new sanctuary that will last as long as the world.' Then he goes back to Paris and builds mean houses, tenement houses, with bad mortar and hollow bricks laid on edge, miserable buildings that won't last twenty years."

"But," said Léon, "they are not required to last twenty years. They are the houses of the Grandes-Écuries of which I was speaking just now, and will one day give place to the great basilica of St. Anthony and its dependencies, a whole religious city that will spring up in the next fifteen years. Before fifteen years have elapsed the good Fathers will own the whole quarter of Paris that has elected our friend Lacrisse."

Madame de Bonmont rose, taking the Comte Davant's arm.

"You understand, I don't like parting with my things. Articles loaned run risks. It makes one so anxious. But if it is in the national interest—the country before all. You and Monsieur Frémont will choose what should be exhibited."

"All the same," said Jacques de Cadde, as they left the table, "you are wrong, Dellion, not to try Father François' expedient."

Coffee was served in the small drawing-room.

Jambe-d'Argent, the Chouan singer, sat down at the piano. He had just added to his repertoire a

few Royalist songs dating from the Restoration, which he thought would make a hit in fashionable drawing-rooms. He sang to the tune of *La Sentinelle:*

"Au champ d'honneur frappé d'un coup mortel,
Le preux Bayard, dans l'ardeur qui l'enflamme,
Fier de périr pour le sol paternel,
Avec ivresse exhalait sa grande âme:
Ah! sans regret je puis mourir,
Mon sort, dit-il, sera digne d'envie,
Puisque jusqu'au dernier soupir,
Sans reproche j'ai pu servir
Mon roi, ma belle et ma patrie."

Chassons des Aigues, the President of the Nationalist Committee of Action, went up to Joseph Lacrisse.

"Come now, my dear Councillor, are we really doing anything on the fourteenth of July?"

"The Council," replied Lacrisse gravely, "cannot organize any demonstration of opinion. That is not within its province, but if spontaneous demonstrations occur——"

"Time passes and the danger increases," replied Chassons des Aigues, who was expecting to be expelled from his Club, and against whom a charge of swindling had been lodged with a magistrate. "We must act."

"Don't get excited," said Lacrisse. "We have the men and we have the money."

"We have the money," repeated Chassons des Aigues thoughtfully.

"With men and money one wins elections," continued Lacrisse. "In twenty months we come into power, and we shall remain in power for twenty years."

"Yes, but until then—" sighed Chassons des Aigues, whose pensive eyes gazed anxiously into the vague future.

"Until then," replied Lacrisse, "we shall canvass the provinces. We have begun already."

"It would be better to bring things to a head at once," declared Chassons des Aigues in accents of deep conviction. "We cannot allow this treacherous Government time to disorganize the Army and paralyse the national defence."

"That is obvious," said Jacques de Cadde. "Now, follow my reasoning carefully. Our cry is 'Long live the Army!' "

"Rather!" said young Dellion.

"Let me speak. Our cry is 'Long live the Army!' It is our rallying cry. If the Government begins to replace the Nationalist generals by Republicans, we shall no longer be able to shout 'Long live the Army!' "

"Why?" asked young Dellion.

"Because then we should be shouting *'Vive la Republique!'* That's plain enough."

"There is no fear of that," said Joseph Lacrisse. "The spirit among the officers is excellent. If the Ministry of Treason succeeds in placing one Republican out of ten in the high command, it will be the end of all things."

"That will be unpleasant," said Jacques de Cadde, "for then we shall be forced to cry 'Hurrah for nine-tenths of the Army!' And that's too long for a slogan."

"Be easy!" said Lacrisse. "When we shout 'Hurrah for the Army!' everybody knows that we mean 'Hurrah for Mercier!' "

Jambe-d'Argent, at the piano, sang:

"Vive le Roi! Vive le Roi!
De nos vieux marins c'est l'usage,
Aucun d'eux ne pensait à soi,
Tout en succombant au naufrage,
Chacun criait avec courage:
Vive le Roi!"

"All the same," said Chassons des Aigues, "the fourteenth of July is a good day to begin the row. There will be a crowd in the streets, an electrified crowd, returning from the review, and cheering the regiments as they pass! With method, one could do a great deal on that day, we could stir the inarticulate masses."

"You are wrong," said Henri Léon. "You don't understand the psychology of crowds. The good Nationalist returning from the review has a baby in

his arms, and is dragging another brat by the hand. His wife is with him, carrying wine, bread and ham in a basket. You try to stir up a man with his two kids and his wife carrying the family lunch! And then, don't you see, the masses are inspired by very simple associations of ideas. You won't get them to riot on a holiday. To crowds, the strings of lamps and the Bengal lights suggest cheerful and pacific ideas. They see a square of Chinese lanterns in front of the cafés, and a gallery decked with bunting for the musicians, and all they think about is dancing. If you want to see riots in the streets you must choose the psychological moment."

"I don't understand," said Jacques de Cadde.

"Well, you must try to understand," said Henri Léon.

"Do you think I'm a blockhead?"

"What an idea!"

"You can say it if you think so; you won't annoy me. I don't pretend to be an intellectual. Besides, I've noticed that the clever men fight against our ideas and beliefs, that they want to destroy all that we cherish. So I should be exceedingly sorry to be what is called a clever man. I'd rather be a fool and think what I think and believe what I believe."

"And you are quite right," said Léon. "We have only to remain what we are. And if we are not fools we must behave as if we are. It is folly that succeeds

best in this world. The clever men are the fools. They don't get anywhere."

"What you say is very true," cried Jacques de Cadde.

Jambe-d'Argent sang:

"Vive le Roi! ce cri de ralliement
Des vrais Français est le seul qui soit digne.
Vive le Roi! de chaque régiment
Que ces trois mots soient la seule consigne."

"All the same," said Chassons des Aigues, "you are wrong, Lacrisse, to reject revolutionary measures; they are the best."

"Children!" said Henri Léon. "We have only one means of action, one only, but it is certain, powerful and efficacious. It is the Affair. The Affair gave us birth; we Nationalists must not forget that. We have grown and prospered through the Affair. It alone has fed us and feeds us still. Thence comes our food and our drink; thence we derive the staff of our being. If, uprooted from the soil, it withers and dies, we shall languish and fade out of existence.

"We can pretend to uproot it, but in reality we shall cherish it carefully, nourish it and water it. The public is an ass; moreover, it is disposed in our favour. When it sees us digging and scraping and hoeing round the plant it will think we are doing our best to uproot it completely, and it will love and

bless us for our zeal. It will never dream that we may be lovingly cultivating it. It has flowered anew in the very middle of the Exhibition, and this simple-minded people does not see that it is our care that has achieved this result."

Jambe-d'Argent sang:

"Puisqu'ici notre général
Du plaisir nous donn' le signal,
Mes amis, poussons à la vente;
Si nous voulons bien le r'mercier,
Chantons, soldat, comme officier:
Moi,
Jarnigoi!
Je suis soldat du Roi.
J'm'en pique, j'm'en flatte et j'm'en vante."

"That's a very pretty song," murmured the Baronne, with half-closed eyes.

"Yes," said Jambe-d'Argent, shaking back his rough mane, "it's called *Cadet-Buteux enrégimenté, ou le Soldat du Roi.* It's a little masterpiece. It was a bright idea of mine to unearth some of these old Royalist songs of the Restoration.

"Moi,
Jarnigoi!
Je suis soldat du Roi."

Then, suddenly bringing down his huge hand on the tail-piece of the piano, where he had laid his chaplet and his medals, he exclaimed:

"Nom de Dieu! Lacrisse, don't touch my rosary. It has been blessed by our Holy Father the Pope!"

"All the same," said Chassons des Aigues, "we ought to have a manifestation in the streets. The streets are ours, and the people ought to know it. Let's go to Longchamps on the 14th."

"I'm on," said Jacques de Cadde.

"So am I," cried Dellion.

"Your manifestations are idiotic," said the little Baron, who until then had been silent. He was rich enough to refrain from belonging to any political party. "Nationalism is beginning to bore me," he added.

"Ernest!" said the Baronne with the gentle severity of a mother.

"It's true," went on Ernest, "your manifestations bore me to death."

Young Dellion, who owed him money, and Chassons des Aigues, who wanted to borrow some, carefully avoided any direct reply. Chassons tried to smile, as though charmed by his wife, and Dellion half assented.

"I don't deny it, but what doesn't bore one to death?"

This inspired Ernest with profound reflections, and after a moment's silence he said, with a genuine accent of sincerity:

"You are right, everything bores one." And he continued, thoughtfully: "Take motor-cars, for instance. They break down just when you don't

want them to. Not that one minds being late, for all the fun one gets where one is going; but I was hung up five hours the other day between Marville and Boulay. Do you know that part of the country? It is just before you get to Dreux. Not a house, not a tree, not a dip in the ground to be seen; nothing but flat, yellow, open country all round, with a silly-looking sky stuck on top of it all like a bell-glass. One grows old in such localities. Never mind, I'm going to try a different make, seventy kilometres an hour, and runs as smoothly. . . . Will you come with me, Dellion? I'm starting to-night."

CHAPTER XXVI

HE Trublions," said Monsieur Bergeret, "fill me with the keenest interest, so it was not without pleasure that I discovered in the valuable book of Nicole Langelier of Paris a second chapter dealing with these little creatures. Do you remember the first, Monsieur Goubin?"

Monsieur Goubin replied that he knew it by heart.

"I congratulate you," replied Monsieur Bergeret, "for it is a perfect breviary. I will now read you the second chapter, which you will like as well as the first."

And the master read as follows:

"Of the hurly-burly and the great din raised by the Trublions and of a beauteous speech which Robin Honeyman made to them.

"In those days the Trublions made a great din in the town, city and university, each one of them smiting with an iron spoon upon a 'trublio,' that is to say, an iron pot or saucepan, and making a right

tuneful noise. And went about shrieking, 'Death to traitors and godmothers!' They likewise hanged upon the walls and in secret places and privy chambers beauteous little scutcheons bearing such devices as 'Death to the baptized Jews! Buy neither of Jews nor of Lombards! Long life to Tintinnabule!' and armed themselves with firearms and swords, for they were of noble lineage. Nevertheless did they receive Martin Baton into their company, and were such excellent good princes withal that they smote with their fists and disdained not the sports of bondsmen.

"And all their converse was of hewing and splitting in twain, and they said in their language and idiom, which was most meet and congruous and corresponsive to their manner of thinking, that it was their purpose to brain the folk, which is properly to draw forth the brain from the brain-pan wherein it doth lie by the order and disposition of nature. And they did always as they had said, always and whenever there was occasion. And being but simple souls they thought themselves to be virtuous men, and that apart from them there were none righteous, but all evil, which was a marvellously clear ordinance, a perfect distinction and a fair order of battle.

"And they had among them many beauteous and most gracious ladies in sumptuous apparel, the which very graciously and without blandishments and wantonness did incite the aforesaid gallant Trublions to belabour, break asunder, overthrow, transpierce and discomfort all who did not trublion.

"Be not amazed but recognize herein the natural

inclination of fair ladies to cruelty and violence and the admiration of high courage and warlike valour as was seen aforetime in the ancient histories, in which it is related that the god Mars was beloved of Venus and of goddesses and mortals in great store, and that, contrariwise, Apollo, although a blithesome player upon the viol, received naught but the disdain of nymphs and chamber-maids.

"And there was not held in the city any conventicle nor procession of the Trublions, nor feast nor burying, but that a poor man or twain or more was belaboured by them, and left half or three parts dead, yea, wholly dead upon the road, which is a most marvellous thing. For it was the custom that whenever the Trublions passed by they belaboured that man which did refuse to 'trublion,' and afterwards did pitifully bear him upon a bier unto the apothecary, and for this reason or for another were the apothecaries of the city upon the side of the Trublions.

"In these days there was a great fair held at Paris in France, more spacious and greater than were ever the fairs of Aix-la-Chapelle, or Frankfort, or the Lendit, or the great fair of Beaucaire. The said fair of Paris was so copious and abundant in merchandise and works of art and gentle inventions that a worthy man named Cornely, who had seen much and was no homestayer, was wont to say that at the sight, practice and contemplation of the same he did lose the care for his eternal salvation and even the desire for meat and drink. The stranger peoples crowded into the city of the Parisians for

to take their pleasure withal and to spend their gold. Kings and princes came at will, causing both men and women to wag their heads and say, 'This is a great honour.'

"As for the merchants, from the greatest to the least, from All-profit to Earn-little, and the men of trades and industries, they understood right well how to sell much merchandise to the strangers which had come to their city for the fair. Journeymen and beggars unfolded their packs, the keepers of eating-houses and ale-houses set out their tables, and the whole city from end to end was in truth an abundant market-place and a joyous refectory.

"It must also be said that the aforesaid merchants, not all, but the greater number, loved the Trublions, whom they admired for their great power of voice and their many antics; yea, there were none, even unto the Jewish merchants and usurers, who did not look upon them with respect and an exceeding humble desire not to be ill-treated of them.

"Thus did the common people and the merchants love the Trublions, but thereto they naturally loved their merchandise and means of livelihood, and were thereby cast into great fear lest by lusty sallies, sudden breaking forth, kicks, blows, noise and trublionage, they should overturn their stalls and booths throughout all the four quarters, gardens and ramparts of the city, and lest the said Trublions, by furious and speedy slaughter, might affright the stranger peoples and cause them to flee the city with their pouches yet full. Truth to tell this danger was not great. The Trublions did utter the most hor-

rible and terrible threats, also they slew the folk in small numbers, one, two, or three at one time, as has been said, and people of the city: never did they attack Englishmen, nor Germans, nor other peoples, but always their own countrymen. They killed in one place, and the city was great, and there they hardly appeared. And it seemed that their love for these crimes did but increase, and likewise their desire to overthrow yet more. It seemed not meet or seemly that, in this great fair of the world and great brotherhood, the Trublions should appear gnashing their teeth, rolling their fiery eyes, clenching their fists, throwing their legs abroad, yelping like mad dogs with horrible howlings, so that the Parisians were in great fear lest the Trublions should perform at an unseasonable time that which they might perform without let or hindrance after the festival and the trading, to wit, the slaughter here and there of a poor devil or so.

"Then began the citizens to say that they must have peace among themselves, and the public order was given forth that there should be peace throughout the city, to which the Trublions hearkened with but one ear and made reply: 'Yea, but to live without discomforting an enemy or even only a stranger, is that content? If we leave the Jews unbaited we shall not win to Paradise. Are we to fold our arms? God hath said that we must labour that we may live.' And pondering in their minds the universal feeling and common purpose they were greatly perplexed.

"Then did an ancient Trublion, hight Robin

Honeyman, gather together the chiefs of the Trublions, being esteemed, venerated and well-accepted of them, for they knew him to be expert in deception and profuse in cunning ruses and guileful devices. Opening his mouth, which was fashioned like that of some ancient pike-fish the which hath lost some teeth but hath yet teeth enough to bite the little fishes, he said very sweetly:

"'Hearken, friends! Give ear, all! We be honest folk and good fellows, we be not mad. We ask for peace, we desire peace. Peace is sweet, peace is a precious ointment; peace is an electuary of Hippocrates, an Apollonian dittany. It is a fair medicinal infusion, it is flower of the lime, mallow and marshmallow. It is sugar and honey. Honey say I? Am I not Robin Honeyman? I do feed on honey. Let the golden age return and I will e'en lick the honey from the trunks of the ancient oak-trees. I speak sooth. I desire peace; ye desire peace.'

"Hearing such words from Robin Honeyman, then did the Trublions begin to make churlish grimaces and whispered among themselves: 'Is this Robin Honeyman our friend that speaketh in this wise? He loves us no longer, he would deal treacherously with us. He seeketh to do us a hurt; or maybe his wits have gone wool-gathering.' And the most trublioniacal among them said: 'What saith this old wheezer? Doth he think we shall put away our staves, cudgels, hammers, and mallets and the beauteous little fire-sticks in our pockets? What are we in time of peace? Naught. We are worth nothing but by reason of the blows we deal. Would he

have us smite no more? Would he have us trublion no more?' And a great clamour and murmuring arose in the assembly, and the council chamber of the Trublions was an angry sea.

"Then did the good Robin Honeyman spread forth his little yellow hands above the wagging heads, like unto a Neptune calming the tempest, and when he had restored the Trublion ocean to its serene and tranquil estate, or well-nigh so, he spoke most courteously:

" 'I am your friend, my sweetings, and your good counsellor. Hearken what I would say before ye wax angry. When I say we wish for peace it is plain that I speak of the pacification of our enemies, adversaries, and all contentious persons who think, speak and act contrariwise unto us. It is visible and apparent that I mean the pacification of all save ourselves; of the police and magistrates opposed to us. Pacification of the civil officers of the peace invested with the power and office to impeach, restrain, repress and contain Trublionage. Pacification of that justice and law by which we be menaced. We desire that these be plunged into a profound and deadly peace. We desire for all that are not Trublions the gulf and abyss of pacification and deadly repose. *Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine.* This is our desire. We do not demand our own pacification. We are not pacified. When we sing *Requiescat,* is it for ourselves? We do not desire to sleep. When we are dead it is for a long time. *Nos qui vivimus,* we bestow peace on others, not in this world but in the next; this is the more certain. I

desire peace. Am I then a simple fellow? Know ye not Robin Honeyman? My sweetings, I carry more than one trick in my juggler's pocket. My lambkins, are you then less wary than the urchins and schoolboys that sport together, who, playing together, when the one desireth to gain the advantage over the other, straightway he crieth "Pax!" which is truce and suspension of hostilities, and having thus deprived him of all defiance and defence he doth easily defeat him and leave him abashed.

"Thus do I Robin Honeyman, King's Attorney. When as doth often hap I have quiet and cunning enemies in the council chamber, I speak to them in this wise: "Peace, peace, peace, gentlemen! *Pax vobiscum!*" and very softly slip a pot of gunpowder and old nails beneath the bench whereon they sit, with a fair wick of which I hold the end. Then, while I feign a peaceful sleep, I light the wick at a seasonable moment, and if they do not all leap into the air the fault is none of my making. Doubtless the powder was discovered, and I await the next good occasion.

" 'My good friends, follow the example and behold a model in your chiefs, masters and rulers. See ye not that Tintinnabule remaineth still and doth not for the present tintinnabulate? He awaits a fit and favourable occasion. Is he then pacified? You do not think so. And the young Trublio, doth he desire peace? Nay, he likewise waiteth. Hearken diligently. It is good, profitable and necessary that you appear to desire a favourable, kind, assuaging and purging pacification. What doth it cost you?

Naught. And you shall derive therefrom great profit. You that are not pacified shall appear pacified, and the other folk (those that do not trublion), who are in truth pacified, shall appear unpacified, corrupted, wayward, furious, wholly opposed and contrary to a gracious peace, so covetable, pleasant and desirable. Thus it shall be made manifest that you have great zeal and love for the public peace and welfare, and also that, on the contrary, your opponents have a malign desire to trouble and destroy the city and all that lies about it. And say not that this is difficult. It will be as you desire and you will make the simple folk believe that you desire peace. They will believe what you tell them, for they hearken unto you. If you say "I desire peace" they will straightway believe that you do truly desire it. Say it then to give them pleasure, for 'twill cost you naught.

" 'Nevertheless, for your enemies and adversaries which at first so piteously bleated "Peace! Peace!" (for they be as gentle as sheep, which cannot be gainsaid) it shall be lawful for you to brain them and to say: "They desired not peace therefore we have overthrown them. We do desire peace and will bring the same to pass when we are your ministers."

" 'It is worthy of all praise pacifically to wage war. Cry "Peace, Peace!" and smite the while. This is Christian-like. "Peace, Peace! This man is dead! Peace, Peace! I have slain three men!" The intention was pacific and you will be judged according to your intention. Go then, cry "Peace!" and smite stoutly. The bells of the

monasteries will ring a merry peal for you that love peace, and the praise of the peaceful citizens will follow you. They seeing your victims with gaping bellies lying upon the highways will say: "That is well done. It is for peace' sake. Long live peace! Without peace no man can live at ease" ' "

CHAPTER XXVII

ADAME DE BONMONT knew the Exhibition well, having dined there on several occasions. That evening she was dining at the "Belle Chocolatière"—a Swiss restaurant situated, as every one knows, on the bank of the Seine—together with the militant élite of Nationalism, Joseph Lacrisse, Henri Léon, Gustave Dellion, Jacques de Cadde, Hugues Chassons des Aigues and Madame de Gromance, who, as Henri Léon remarked, was very like the pretty servant in Liotard's pastel, a greatly enlarged copy of which served as a sign for the restaurant. Madame de Bonmont was gentle and tender-hearted. It was love, relentless love that had placed her among these warriors, and, like the Antigone of Sophocles, she brought among them a soul fashioned not for hatred but for sympathy. She pitied the victims. Jamont seemed to her the most pathetic of these, and the premature retirement of this general moved her to tears. She thought of embroidering a cushion for him, on which he could lay his glorious head. She

loved making such presents, the value of which consisted solely in the feeling that prompted them. Her love, strengthened by admiration, for Municipal Councillor Lacrisse, left her a good deal of leisure, which she employed in weeping over the misfortunes of the Army and in eating sweets. She was fast putting on flesh and was becoming quite an imposing figure.

The thoughts of young Madame de Gromance were of a less generous kind. She had loved and deceived Gustave Dellion, and then she had loved him no longer. But as he removed her light pink-flowered cloak under the respectfully-lowered eyes of the head-waiter on the terrace of the "Belle Chocolatière," Gustave muttered in her ears words that sounded strangely like "jade" and "beastly strumpet." She did not allow the least distress to appear on her face, but inwardly she thought him rather sweet, and felt that she was about to love him again. And Gustave thoughtfully realized that for the first time in his life he had spoken like a lover. He sat down solemnly beside Clotilde.

The dinner, which was the last of the season, was by no means a merry one. The sadness of farewell was felt and a certain Nationalist melancholy. Doubtless they still hoped—what am I saying?—they still cherished infinite hopes, but it is painful, when one has everything, both men and money, to

await the future, the dim, distant future, the realization of long-cherished desires and urgent ambitions. Joseph Lacrisse alone remained calm, thinking that he had done enough for his King in being elected municipal councillor by the Nationalist Republicans of the Grandes-Écuries.

"Taking it altogether," he said, "everything went very well at Longchamps on the 14th. The Army was cheered. There were shouts of 'Hurrah for Jamont! Hurrah for Bougon!' There was a great deal of enthusiasm."

"Doubtless, doubtless," said Henri Léon; "but Loubet returned unmolested to the Élysée, and the day did not forward our affairs overmuch."

Hugues Chassons des Aigues, who had a fresh scar on his nose—which was of the big and royal order—frowned and said proudly:

"I can tell you things were hot at the Cascades. When the Socialists cheered the Republic and the Army——"

"The police," put in Madame de Bonmont, "ought not to allow things to be shouted."

"When the Socialists cheered the Republic and the Army we replied, 'Long live the Army! Death to the Jews!' The 'white carnations,' whom I had hidden in the crowd, rallied to my cry. They charged the 'red eglantines' under a hail of iron chairs. They were magnificent. But it was no good,

the crowd would not respond. The Parisians had come with their wives and children, with baskets and string bags full of food, and the place swarmed with country cousins come to see the Exhibition. Old farmers with stiff legs who looked on with fishy eyes, peasant women in shawls, looking as scared as owls! How could we stir up a family party of that sort?"

"Doubtless," said Lacrisse, "the moment was ill-chosen. Besides, to a certain extent, we have to respect the Exhibition truce."

"All the same," said Chassons des Aigues, "we hit pretty hard at the Cascades. I gave Citizen Bissolo a crack on the head that sent it down into his hump. I saw him fall to the ground; he looked just like a tortoise. Then, 'Hurrah for the Army! Death to the Jews!' "

"Doubtless, doubtless," said Henri Léon gravely. "But 'Hurrah for the Army!' and 'Death to the Jews!' is a trifle subtle for crowds. It is—if I may say so—too literary, too classical, and it is not sufficiently revolutionary. 'Hurrah for the Army!' It is fine, it is noble, it is proper, it is cold—yes, it is cold. Let me tell you, there is only one way to excite a crowd, and that is by panic. Believe me, the only way to get a mob of unarmed people on the run is to put fear into their bellies. You should have run, crying—what shall I say?—'Save your-

selves! Look out! You are betrayed! Frenchmen, you are betrayed!' If you had shouted that or something like it, in a lugubrious voice, running along the lawn, five hundred thousand people would have run along with you, would have run quicker than you, until they dropped. It would have been terrible and magnificent. You would have been knocked down and trampled to death, mashed to a pulp, but you would have started the revolution."

"Do you really think so?" asked Jacques de Cadde.

"I am certain of it," replied Henri Léon. "'Treachery!' that is the true cry of riot, the cry that gives wings to the crowd and sets brave men and cowards alike going at the same pace, fills a hundred thousand hearts with one emotion and restores the use of his legs to the paralytic. Ah, my dear Chassons, if you had shouted at Longchamps 'We are betrayed!' you would have seen your old screech-owl with her basket of hard-boiled eggs and her umbrella and your old fellow with the stiff legs running like hares."

"Running where?" asked Lacrisse.

"I don't know. Who knows where a panic-stricken crowd runs to? They don't know themselves. But what does that matter? They've been set going, and that's enough. You can't cause riots with method. To occupy strategical points was well

enough in the far-off days of Barbès and Blanqui, but to-day, what with the telegraph, telephone or merely the police and their bicycles, any sort of concerted action is out of the question. Can you see Jacques de Cadde occupying the police-station in the Rue de Grenelle, for instance? No. All that is possible nowadays is a vague, immense, tumultuous demonstration. And fear, unanimous, tragical fear alone is capable of carrying away the enormous human masses that frequent public fêtes or open-air shows. You ask me where the crowd of the 14th of July would have run to, spurred on as by a big black flag at the cries of 'Treachery! Treachery! The foreigner! Treachery!' Where would they have run to? Into the lake, I suppose."

"Into the lake," repeated Jacques de Cadde. "Well, they would have been drowned, that's all."

"Well," returned Henri Léon, "would thirty thousand drowned citizens have counted for nothing? Would not the Ministry and the Government have experienced serious difficulty and real danger in the matter? Wouldn't that have been a good day's work? Look here, you are no politicians. You don't care a damn whether you overthrow the Republic or not."

"You'll see that after the Exhibition," said young Cadde with the simplicity of faith. "I myself smashed one of them at Longchamps for a start."

"Ah, you smashed one of them, did you?" asked young Dellion with interest. "What sort of a specimen?"

"A mechanic. It would have been better if he had been a Senator, of course; but in a crowd you are more likely to chance on a workman."

"What was your mechanic doing?" asked Léon.

"He was shouting 'Hurrah for the Army!' so I bashed him."

Thereupon, fired with generous emulation, young Dellion told them that on hearing a Socialist-Dreyfusard shout for Loubet, he had bashed his jaw for him.

"All goes well!" said Jacques de Cadde.

"There are some things that might go better," said Hugues Chassons des Aigues. "Don't let us be too pleased with ourselves. On July the 14th, Loubet, Waldeck, Millerand and André each returned home safe and sound. They would not have returned had my advice been heeded. But no one will act, we are lacking in energy."

Joseph Lacrisse answered gravely:

"No, no, we are not wanting in energy, but for the moment there's nothing to be done. After the Exhibition we shall enter upon a vigorous course of action. It will be a favourable moment. After her fête France will be suffering from a bad head and a bad temper. There will be lock-outs and strikes.

Nothing simpler than to provoke a Ministerial crisis, even a Presidential crisis. Don't you agree with me, Léon?"

"Doubtless, doubtless," replied Henri Léon. "But we must not forget that in three months' time we shall be a little less numerous and Loubet a little less unpopular."

Jacques de Cadde, Chassons des Aigues, Dellion, Lacrisse and all the Trublions tried to drown with their protestations so dismal a prediction, but in a very quiet voice Henri Léon proceeded:

"It is inevitable. Loubet will become less unpopular daily. He was primarily disliked because of the reports that we spread about him, but he will not live up to all of them. He is not great enough to equal the picture we drew of him, to the terror of the crowd. We showed them a Loubet of a hundred cubits' stature, protecting the thieves in Parliament and destroying the Army. The reality will seem much less terrible. They will see that he does not always protect the thieves or disorganize the Army. He will hold reviews. That will produce an impression. He will ride in a carriage. That is more dignified than going on foot. He will bestow crosses and an abundance of academic palms, and those who receive the cross or the palms will refuse to believe that he intends to betray France. He will make tactful speeches; you may be sure of that; tactful

because utterly inane. If he wants to be acclaimed he has only to travel about. The country people will cheer for the President as he passes, just as though he were the kind-hearted tanner whose loss we all deplore because he loved the Army. And if the Russian alliance were pulled off—the bare idea of such a thing makes me shudder—you would see our Nationalist friends unharness his carriage and drag it through the streets. I don't say he's a genius, but he's not a bigger fool than the rest of us, and he is trying to improve his position. That's only natural. We want to overthrow him and he is wearing us out."

"I defy him to wear us out," cried young Cadde.

"Time alone will suffice to wear us out," replied Henri Léon. "How fine our Municipal Council was on the evening of the poll that gave us the majority! 'Hurrah for the Army! Death to the Jews!' yelled the electors, drunk with joy, pride and love. And the successful candidates, beaming, replied, 'Death to the Jews! Hurrah for the Army!' But as the new Council can neither free the sons of the electors from military service nor distribute the money of the rich Jews among the small shopkeepers nor even spare the working-man the horrors of slack times, it will betray vast hopes and become as odious as it was once desirable. It will shortly run the risk of becom-

ing unpopular over questions of monopoly, gas, water and omnibuses."

"You are wrong, my dear Léon," cried Joseph Lacrisse. "There is nothing to fear with regard to the renewal of monopolies. We say to the electors, 'We are giving you cheap gas,' and the electors will not complain. The Municipal Council of Paris, elected on an exclusively political programme, will exercise a decisive influence on the political and national crises that will follow immediately after the closing of the Exhibition."

"Yes, but in order to do that," said Chassons des Aigues, "it will have to place itself at the head of the revolutionary movement. If it is moderate, prudent, conciliatory, considerate, all is lost. The Council must realize that it has been elected to overthrow and smash Parliamentarianism."

"Blow the trumpet! Blow the trumpet!" cried Jacques de Cadde.

"Little must be said, but that little to the point," continued Chassons des Aigues.

"Blow the trumpet! Blow the trumpet!"

Chassons des Aigues disdained the interruption.

"A pledge, a simple pledge should be expressed from time to time. Such as: 'Impeachment of the Ministers——' "

"Blow the trumpet! Blow the trumpet!" cried young Cadde louder than ever.

Chassons des Aigues tried to make him listen to reason.

"I am not opposed on principle to our friends sounding the *hallali* of the parliamentarians, but in public gatherings the trumpet is the supreme argument of the minority. We must keep it for the Luxembourg and Palais Bourbon. I should like to point out, my dear fellow, that at the Hôtel de Ville we are in the majority."

This consideration did not move young Cadde, who continued to vociferate:

"Blow the trumpet! Blow the trumpet! Do you know how to blow the trumpet, Lacrisse? If you don't, I'll teach you; it is quite essential for a municipal councillor to know how to blow the trumpet."

"To resume," said Chassons des Aigues, as solemn as a judge, "the first pledge of the Council should be the impeachment of the Ministers; the second, the impeachment of the Senators; and the third, the impeachment of the President of the Republic. After a few resolutions of this description the Ministry will proceed to the dissolution of the Council. The Council resists, and makes a vehement appeal to public opinion. Outraged Paris rises——"

"Do you think so?" asked Henri Léon quietly. "Do you really think, Chassons, that outraged Paris will rise?"

"I do think so," replied Chassons des Aigues.

"I do not think so," said Henri Léon. "You know Citizen Bissolo—since it was you who nearly brained him on the fourteenth of July at the review —I know him too. One night, on the boulevard, during a demonstration following the election of the deplorable Loubet, Citizen Bissolo came to me as the most constant and most generous of his enemies. We exchanged a few words. All our paid roughs were shouting at the top of their voices. Shouts of 'Hurrah for the Army!' resounded from the Bastille to the Madeleine. Smiling and amused, the passers-by were on our side. Bissolo stretched out his long hunchback's arm like a scythe in the direction of the crowd and remarked: 'I know the jade. Mount her, and she'll break your back by suddenly lying down when you aren't expecting it.' Those were the words of Citizen Bissolo as we stood at the corner of the Rue Drouot on the day when Paris offered herself to us."

"But this Bissolo of yours is a rogue," cried Joseph Lacrisse. "He insults the people."

"He is a prophet," replied Henri Léon.

Young Jacques de Cadde chanted, in his thick voice:

"Blow the trumpet! It's the only way!"

THE END.

COMPLETE TABLE OF CONTENTS

Booklovers' Edition of
ANATOLE FRANCE

Bound in Ten Volumes

VOLUME I

BOOK PAGE

1. MOTHER OF PEARL

THE PROCURATOR OF JUDÆA 3
AMYCUS AND CELESTINE 31
THE LEGEND OF SAINTS OLIVERIA AND LIBERETTA 41
ST. EUPHROSINE 57
SCHOLASTICS 79
OUR LADY'S JUGGLER 89
THE MASS OF SHADOWS 103
LESLIE WOOD 115
GESTAS 135
THE MANUSCRIPT OF A VILLAGE DOCTOR . 149
MEMOIRS OF A VOLUNTEER 167
DAWN 233
MADAME DE LUZY 251
THE BOON OF DEATH BESTOWED 265
A TALE OF THE MONTH OF FLOREAL IN THE YEAR II 273
THE LITTLE LEADEN SOLDIER 285
COUNT MORIN, DEPUTY 303

BOOK PAGE

2. BALTHASAR

BALTHASAR 3
THE CURÉ'S MIGNONETTE 29
M. PIGEONNEAU 35
THE DAUGHTER OF LILITH 59
LAETA ACILIA 83
THE RED EGG 101
HONEY-BEE 119

VOLUME II

BOOK

1. AT THE SIGN OF THE REINE PÉDAUQUE
2. THE OPINIONS OF JEROME COIGNARD

VOLUME III

BOOK PAGE

1. THE MERRIE TALES OF JACQUES TOURNEBROCHE

The Merrie Tales of Jacques Tournebroche 1
Child Life in Town and Country . . . 159

2. THE CRIME OF SYLVESTRE BONNARD

VOLUME IV

BOOK PAGE

1. PENGUIN ISLAND
2. THE SEVEN WIVES OF BLUEBEARD

The Seven Wives of Bluebeard . . . 3
The Miracle of the Great St. Nicolas . 43
The Duchess of Cicogne and Monsieur de Boulingrin 93
The Shirt 119

VOLUME V

BOOK

1. THE REVOLT OF THE ANGELS
2. THE WHITE STONE

VOLUME VI

BOOK

1. A MUMMER'S TALE
2. THE RED LILY

VOLUME VII

BOOK

1. THE WELL OF ST. CLARE
2. THAÏS

VOLUME VIII

BOOK PAGE

1. THE GODS ARE ATHIRST
2. CLIO

CLIO 1
THE CHÂTEAU DE VAUX-LE-VICOMTE . . 131

VOLUME IX

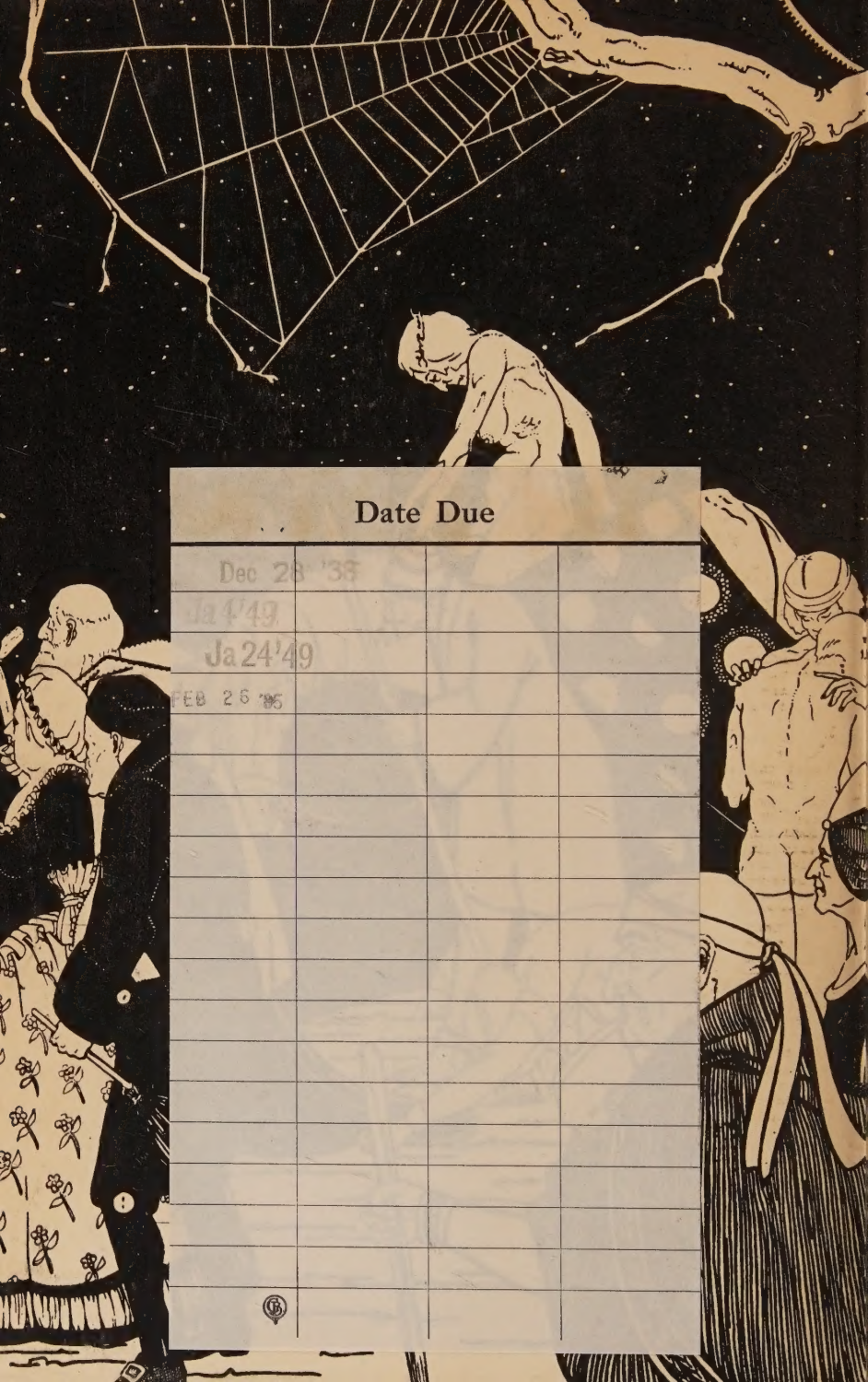
BOOK

1. THE ELM TREE ON THE MALL
2. THE WICKER-WORK WOMAN

VOLUME X

BOOK

1. THE AMETHYST RING
2. M. BERGERET IN PARIS



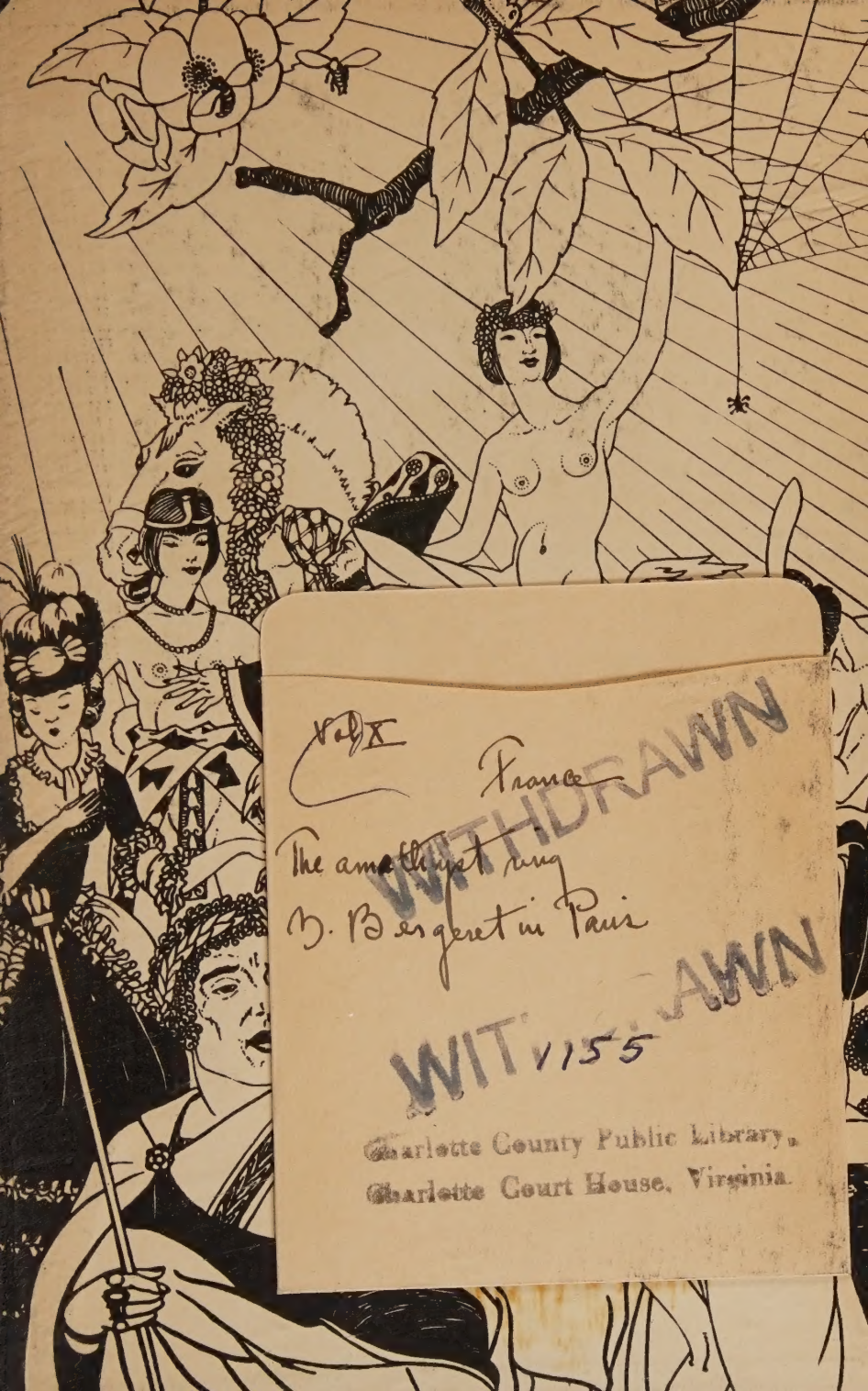
Date Due

Dec 28 '38

Ja 4'49

Ja 24'49

FEB 26 '65



Vol X
France
The amethyst ring
B. Bergeret in Paris
WITHDRAWN
WITHDRAWN
WIT 1155
Charlotte County Public Library,
Charlotte Court House, Virginia.

Charlotte County Library
3 0000 00031 1195